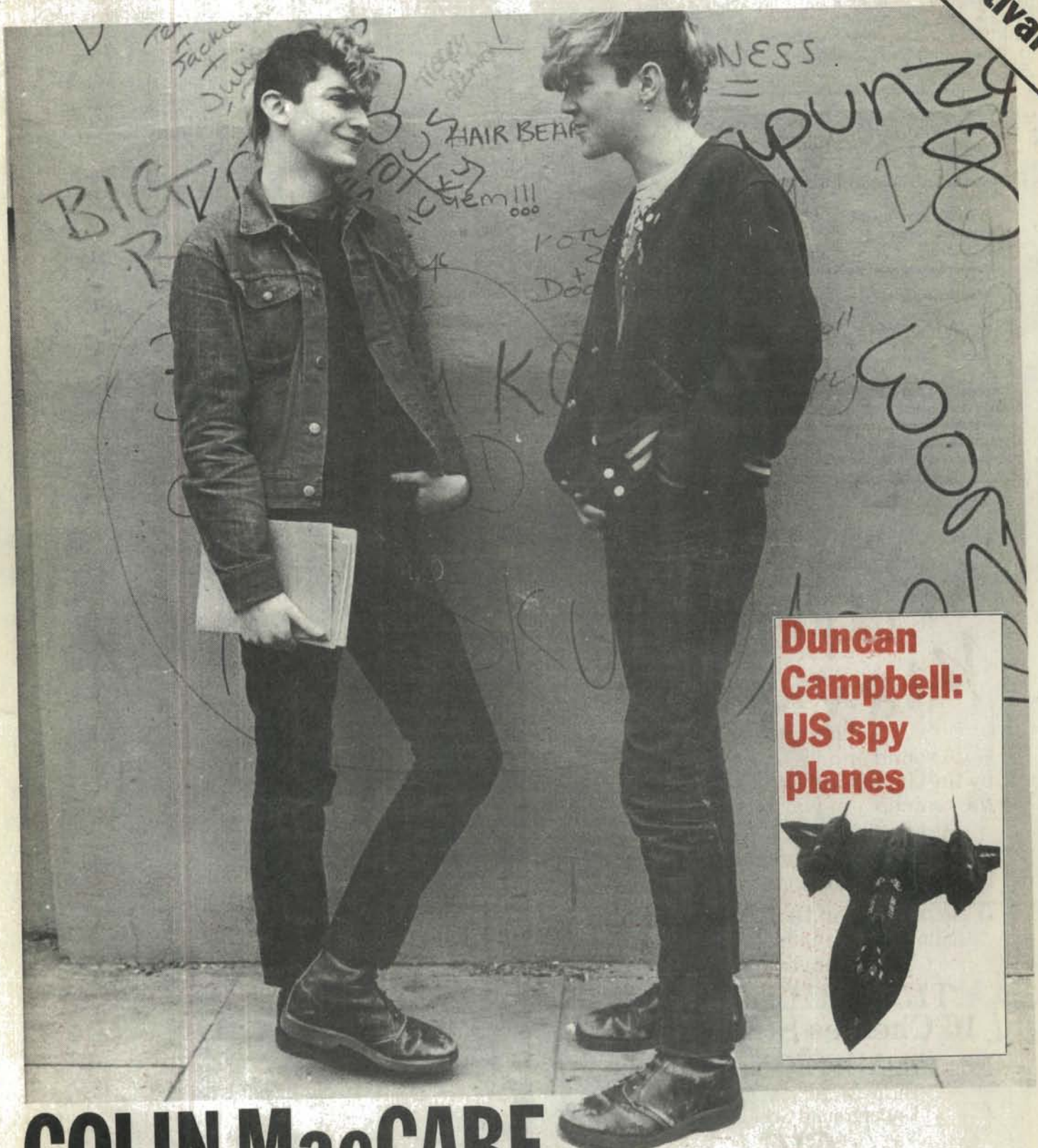
New Statesman

9 September 1983 70p IR £1.02 US$1.50 By Air

Derek Mahon at the Edinburgh Festival



Duncan Campbell: US spy planes

COLIN MacCABE

proposes his solution for the future of Britain's secondary education

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New Statesman

New Statesman
14-16 Farringdon Lane
London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001
Editorial: 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London EC1
©1983 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors
Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd

Subscriptions: Lesley Bridgmount, Cecilia Milton
Circulation: Liz Cooper, Tim Freeman
Display advertisements: Michael Roberts 01-253 2001
Classified advertisements: Laura Berryman, Stephen Mitchell 01-251 5487

Subscription Rates
Surface mail:
UK £29, Overseas £32
Air mail:
Europe £36, Middle East £39, Africa, India, South America £40, Australasia, Far East £45, USA $79, Canada $92

Unsolicited manuscripts will only be returned if an SAE is enclosed.

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New Statesman Vol 106 No 2738 9 September 1983

Time is running out

TERRIBLE AND POINTLESS blunders are – and always will be – part of life. The shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007 was one such blunder. As the facts emerge, it looks increasingly as if it is an incident most fully explained by the 'cock-up' rather than by the 'conspiracy' school of history. The Korean pilot should not have been where he was. The Soviet air defence command became over-excited, when it thought that it was about to catch an American spy plane deep inside its territory. When the interception was made by Soviet fighters, initial contact was on radar. The Soviet fighters were slow to make contact and running out of fuel by the time they did so. By the time visual contact was made, Soviet ground control was psychologically committed to attacking the deep intruder. The Soviet and Korean aircraft had no means of communicating by radio. None of this is the slightest consolation to those who were involved. But it is how things happen.

The more important historical aspect is what those involved in the political process decide to make of such an incident. The Soviet leadership is clearly embarrassed. The image of the Soviet Union has been damaged, both by the callousness of the act and by the evidence that the Soviet military are prepared to take such action with its obvious potential consequences on their own operational authority.

President Reagan clearly decided from the moment that he heard the news to use it politically for all that it was undoubtedly worth. The incident fitted ideally his crude anti-communist crusade. He saw at once the mileage that could be extracted from it in terms of rallying support for higher American defence spending with the American people and Congress. And, more directly, the President saw a political chance to bolster his image as a national leader in a continuing American struggle against the forces of international evil. His strikingly demagogic television address on Monday was a clear linking of the KAL incident with his plans for a second term as President.

In this atmosphere some basic elements of the story need stressing. First, President Reagan spoke and behaved from the outset as if the incident was a deliberate and aggressive attack on the United States itself. In fact it was an act of punishment (even if totally unjustified) against a *South Korean* airliner which was deep inside the Soviet Union, despite clear warnings that such overflights are liable to be shot at without warning. (It remains, incidentally, a wholly unexplained mystery as to how an aircraft with several sets of the most modern electronic navigational equipment could have been where Flight 007 was; and as to why the pilot seems to have given no indication by radio at any time that he was lost, or being intercepted.)

There can be no logical justification for using the incident as an argument for increased *Western* military spending, as the Reagan administration (and predictably our own domestic hawk, Defence Minister Heseltine) is doing. The only thing that the incident proves is that the Soviet Union is jumpier and more ruthless about the defence of its own domestic air space than Western countries. But this we all knew before. It is, for example, the reason why the stationing of Pershing II missiles in West Germany – with their capacity accurately to take out Soviet military command and communications systems and their extemely short flying time to their target – will be such a destabilising development.

THE ARGUMENT should in fact be stood on its head. The more anxious the Soviet military authorities become about American capacity to get through their defences, the more rapid and unstable their response will be to other potential incidents of the kind we have just experienced. But the KAL incident also provides us with an even more direct example of the lethal dangers of the latest phase of the nuclear and space arms race – provoked it has to be said in large measure by the paranoid policies of the Reagan Administration, as Michael Klare shows in his article on page 16 of this issue.

That danger lies in the evident fact that at a moment of military crisis under conditions of modern warfare there is no longer any practical possibility of *political* control of events. We do not know whether there was any Soviet political authorisation of the military decision to shoot down the Korean airliner. But it is clear that Mr Andropov only knew of what was potentially the most dangerous recent US-Soviet incident *after* the event. (In the case of a strangely similar military blunder – the sinking of the *General Belgrano* off the Falklands – it proved just possible to involve an ad hoc group of politicians in the decision. But that decision was conditioned by the way in which the military presented the facts.)

If this is what happens in situations where communications systems are still functioning normally and the eventual decision about whether to fire or not can be spread over matters of hours, consider what the reality would be in the opening stages of a potential nuclear conflict. Military installations, both offensive and defensive, naturally have operating instructions and are governed by 'rules of engagement' that are laid down on the basis that they are to be used for real. They would be pointless if it were otherwise.

Politicians try to soothe fears by insisting that they will remain in political control of the *ultimate* decision to fire. (Mrs Thatcher makes this point repeatedly in relation to cruise and Pershing in particular.) But this is simply an illusion. If it ever came to it, the critical decisions would have to be made in minutes, or even seconds. Even if communications systems were still functioning, the decision would in fact be determined by the *military* information being presented. In fact the civilians would be cut off without communications, once anything started to happen. In such circumstances the *duty* of the military on both sides would be to act according to their standing instructions. Mass mutual suicide would be the result. The real lesson of the Korean incident is not that we need more spending on defence, but that we must have mutual disarmament agreements of substance before we are overwhelmed by the present military madness. □

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Chris Davies/Network

Carrington delivers the goods

MORE EVIDENCE has come to light which shows that a radar deal between British electronics firm Marconi and the South African government is in breach of the UN arms embargo. Marconi, headed by former Foreign Secretary Lord Carrington, has denied any military use for the equipment, claiming that it was for 'updating existing air traffic control'.

A year ago Fred Bull, the director of Pretoria's state arms-buying corporation (Armscor), admitted that South Africa's radar capability was deteroriating. He concluded that the present radar system would have to be replaced soon because it was 'a bit long in the tooth'.

When it was revealed in April that Marconi was to sell South Africa a £5-million S247 radar system, a company spokesperson, Peter Rackham, used a remarkably similar phrase. He said the South Africans felt their existing system was 'getting long in the tooth'.

Lord Carrington, who was head of the Foreign Office when the Government granted Marconi an export licence two years ago, is now chairman of GEC, Marconi's parent company. When approached about the military implications of the South African sale, Lord Carrington replied in a private letter that 'the radar which Marconi has sold to South Africa is for purely civilian purposes, and not military'. He added that 'from my previous position as Foreign Secretary, I know that the Government would not breach the United Nations embargo on arms to South Africa'.

This line was subsequently repeated in Britain's official response to the United Nations: the equipment is being sold to 'the authority in South Africa which seeks to ensure the safety of civil aviation in Southern Africa'. But the South Africans themselves admit that the Air Space Control Authority has a rather wider function. The 1982 Defence White Paper officially describes its function as coordinating 'air traffic, air defence and air defence artillery'.

Jane's Weapon Systems describes the S247 as 'a high-power static radar system used for defence purposes'. The 1979 South African Defence White Paper admits that 'modernisation of the static air defence radar to ensure a better airspace control is being planned', while the 1982 White Paper adds that 'air defence fighters are integrated with the radar system to ensure complete cover'.

Marconi says that the radar equipment is being flown out to South Africa from the company's Chelmsford plant in grey crates. Informed sources suggest that not all these consignments have yet been dispatched. Meanwhile the military importance of South Africa's radar system has again been demonstrated. On 23 May South African jets made a bombing raid on the Mozambican capital of Maputo, killing six civilians.

Without the earlier static radar system, installed by Marconi some years ago, South African raids on the front-line states would be considerably more difficult. Yet the British Government continues to maintain that the Marconi deal does not contravene the South African arms embargo.

Martin Bailey

● The arms embargo which Britain imposed against Israel in June 1982 after its invasion of the Lebanon has not stopped Marconi from touting for business. Menachem Eini, the retired Israeli general who is developing the Lavi air force plane, has admitted that 'we have had a proposal from Marconi which we are seriously considering'. Initially the bid is for $7 million-worth of computerised television and optical equipment to go into the cockpits of the prototype aircraft. But the orders which might follow could be substantially greater since the Israeli air force is expecting to build 300 Lavi planes. A Marconi spokesman has said that 'we do not comment on someone else's statements'.

Irish jobs are on the line

THE IRISH government is bracing itself to resist pressure from the United States to withdraw servicing facilities to Aeroflot flights at Shannon Airport. At the moment 22 Ilyushin jets pass through Shannon every week on route from Moscow to Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Nicaragua. The US government has already said that it believes the Russians use Aeroflot's trans-atlantic flights for spying purposes.

If such pressure is exerted it will once again raise questions about Ireland's traditional neutrality. This last became an issue during the Falklands conflict when Ireland withdrew its support for EEC sanctions against Argentina after the sinking of the *General Belgrano*.

On this occasion there are good reasons why the Irish government will be extremely reluctant to offend the United States. It has gone to great pains to cultivate a wide spectrum of political support in Washington for its Northern Irish policy and has been rewarded with benevolent comments on the issue from President Reagan himself. In terms of economic self-interest, American companies and their subsidiaries now employ 36,000 people in the Republic, or one in six of the manufacturing work force.

Against this, the consequences for Shannon Airport if sanctions against Aeroflot were to be imposed would be very serious. The Russian airline accounts for a third of the business done at the massive airport complex. Annual revenue of £4 million from Aeroflot is divided between re-fuelling and catering services. Jobs would certainly be lost if these were stopped by sanctions. In addition, a deal has recently been completed which will give Shannon access to low cost Russian fuel which it can retail to charter airlines and this could be put at risk.

The situation is the more problematical for the government, because the airport is a major employer in a rural area where jobs are few and far between. The various contracts with Aeroflot have been a major factor in turning a loss of £1½ million at Shannon only three years ago into a profit of just over £½ million last year. The days have long since gone since planes on the North American route had to refuel at Shannon as the last airport before the Atlantic and its whole operation has become increasingly vulnerable. For their part, the airport authorities know perfectly well that, if sanctions *are* imposed, they will cause no real problems for Aeroflot.

The company which operates the re-fuelling service has already said that the Russian airline could re-route its trans-Atlantic flights through North Africa.

Mary Holland

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Deprivation in Strathclyde

A BABY BORN today in Easterhouse, one of Glasgow's peripheral council estates, is over four times more likely to die within a year than a child born in Bishopbriggs, a middle-class area on the outskirts of the city. These figures have been revealed as a result of Strathclyde Regional Council's recently completed 18-month review of their area-based strategy for tackling multiple deprivation. The Labour-controlled council's basic conclusion is that after six years, although some improvements have been made, social divisions are increasing and the problems are getting worse.

The council originally set out to try and break 'the vicious circle of hopelessness and cynicism' which prevailed in 45 identified areas of Strathclyde. In 1981 the number of these 'areas of priority treatment' had to be increased to 75 to cope with deteriorating conditions. Progress has been severely hampered by central government policies, not least because since 1976 unemployment in the region has trebled. The drive to sell council houses and the introduction of parents' 'right to choose' in education have further reinforced social inequalities.

The region's statistics show that in the deprived areas children are four times more likely to be taken into care than children in better-off areas. Children from the deprived areas are much more likely to live in severely overcrowded conditions and do less well at school. Yet the evidence shows clearly that the most disadvantaged make much less use of the welfare services.

Recognising the failure of the free market to assist those in need, Strathclyde's long-term aim is to engineer social change. They admit that one of the main barriers is the reactionary attitude of their own staff, who are fiercely criticised for their professional sectarianism, their ignorance and their prejudices about the poor. The council conclude that there must be more training for officers and 'radical changes' in the structure of local government.

The council also intend to reclassify deprived areas more carefully in order to deploy resources more effectively. But with the government now insisting on a new £20-million clawback, it is clear that progress in the areas of need will only be achieved at the expense of the better-off areas. According to senior Strathclyde councillors, annoyed at the 'phoney wars' previously fought by other Labour-controlled councils like Lothian, government-imposed cuts are only now really beginning to hurt.

Rob Edwards

Not the Edinburgh Fringe

EDINBURGH is a city of traditions. So when no one appearing at Assembly Rooms turned up at the 1983 Fringe's opening press reception, it was noticed.

The annual press reception is the only time many of the 460 companies appearing on the Edinburgh Festival Fringe will come into contact with the media. They can't afford to miss a good opportunity to sell their product to the local, national or international critics.

Assembly Productions, the company set up by William Burdett-Coutts (of bank fame), it seems, can. Indeed since it went into business three years ago, it has changed most of the rules governing the Fringe.

Traditional groups pay for an Edinburgh venue and try to find some decent accommodation. They paste up their own posters and give out their own handbills. If they are lucky, they get a friendly review in the *Scotsman*. If they are even luckier they get an audience.

Mr Burdett-Coutts does it differently. He pays to rent the Assembly Rooms from the local authority and then sells the prime venue (complete with potted plants and a bar) to 64 of the best shows in town – not to second-year students from the local drama college, but to the Flying Pickets, who do network television on Sundays and the Fringe on Mondays.

It is slick and professional entertainment, but there are those who think it may kill the anarchic and experimental side of the Edinburgh Fringe. As Andrew Dorward, the theatre editor of the student-owned *Festival Times*, put it:

> The Assembly operation probably had to happen. But its a brutal form of natural selection. A visitor to Edinburgh can have a drink, have a meal and catch a hit television act like the National Theatre of Brent, without moving from the Assembly Rooms. Fine – but who's going to take the trouble to go to the Murrayfield Parish Church to see a small drama company?

The success of the Assembly has brought its imitators. The Circuit organisation, which started last year, has 36 shows on at the 1983 Fringe and the locally based Theatre Workshop has 28 companies playing its two venues.

The power of those organisations is boosted by their access to the press. They make life much easier for a critic faced with the indecipherable Fringe programme.

One James Fenton told an Edinburgh audience last week: 'There's just too much going on'. And fellow critic Michael Billington agreed: 'The Fringe has become unreviewable'.

Erica Bolton, the highly professional PRO of Assembly Productions, said: 'I'm afraid the old motto of the Fringe that anything goes, is just not true any more. Some people will suffer but you can't blame others for being good at their job'. Giles Gordon was more caustic: 'Could Rosencrantz and Guildenstern make it today?'

Jim Innes

MISCELLANY

Image transfer

Has the new football season given us hope about future developments inside the Conservative Party? Those clever advertising people at Saatchi and Saatchi have been trying to change the image of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club – just as they did Mrs T. The major television plug for the North London team featured the players and assorted fans running out onto the pitch. The second man out of the tunnel in this advert is Scottish international striker and Spurs crowd hero Steve Archibald. What a pity then, that just as the ad was being transmitted in prime time Mr Archibald announced that he was as sick as a parrot with Spurs and wanted a transfer. But, alas, team discipline in Boadicea's cabinet is still rather tighter.

Marshall plan

Is Sir Walter Marshall, pro-nuclear boss of the Central Electricity Generating Board, about to join the Green movement? It certainly looked like it this week, when he and Ian MacGregor – now of the National Coal Board – announced a joint CEGB/NCB grant of £5 million for a survey on acid rain damage in Norway and Sweden. 'The electricity board has a duty to consider the effects of its policy on flora and fauna', said the seemingly ecologically-minded man. One point he didn't mention, however. The CEGB sends up 2¼ million tons of sulphur dioxide from its

chimneys each year – and sulphur dioxide is the direct cause of . . . acid rain.

Still going strong

Next month will see a celebration in which the National Front and other assorted nasties will not be taking part. *Searchlight*, the magazine that provides a home for the best and bravest in anti-fascist journalism, is commemorating its 100th issue. To coincide with all the partying and justified self-congratulations, this admirable journal is to be nationally distributed by newsagents for the first time. So those who like to read about themselves, but can't get around to filling in a subscription form, will now be able to lay their hands on it as well.

Blackpool lights

Our man at Blackpool for the TUC had his usual tired and emotional time – especially this year in the bar at the Imperial Hotel, newly refurbished and complete with *fin de siècle* mirrors, embellished by all our Prime Ministers since Churchill (except for some curious reason Eden, Douglas-Home and Heath). No wonder the Tories have decided to give Blackpool a miss. He seems to have spent much of his time dodging a mole-like, bespectacled figure who was moving around conspiratorially and pressing pieces of paper into people's hands. This turned out to be one Tony Halmos, trade union rep. for the Social Democrats, who confided with evident relief that he had not yet been attacked or verbally abused by the brothers. One of the sadder sights was the little known Ernie Nevin, General Secretary of the Merchant Navy and Airline Pilots Association. He had been put on the right-wing slate for the elected General Council places reserved for the smaller unions. So confident was he that the whole slate would be swept in that two hours before the result was announced his press officer was handing round a long and tedious curriculum of his long and tedious career. In the event the right-wing attempted coup was only a partial success. So, for the moment at least, his CV will not be able to include membership of the TUC's general council.

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Latin American visitors

OFFICERS of the Chilean navy are being trained at a government shore establishment near Portsmouth. According to an article which appeared in the 2 September issue of the *Leeds Other Paper*, Lieutenants Gustavo Jordan, Jorge Chubretovich and Guillermo Montero came to Britain on 3 March this year to attend a five-week language course at Fareham in Hampshire; but their visas were for ten months.

Under the heading 'Technical Overlay' on their language course enrolment forms, all three had inserted the word 'Naval'. When the Chilean Naval Mission in London was contacted, however, it could not comment on the matter. The owner of one of the houses where the men lodged was more helpful: 'He finished his language course and then went on to a Naval course at HMS, now what was it? Dryad I think'.

When the *NS* approached the Foreign and Commonwealth training section of *HMS Dryad*, we were told that three 'officers of the Chilean Navy are taking International Principal Warfare Officer Course A, which is more advanced than some, for nations with sophisticated navies, and orientated towards NATO'.

After a prolonged wait it was possible to speak to Lieutenant Jordan on the telephone, who explained that 'my course ends in November, but we all may go on another one. Please tell me again why you want this information'. After it was explained again that an article was to be written in the *NS*, Jordan spoke to somebody, while covering the phone, and then said 'I cannot answer any more questions, I'm sorry . . .'

Although the UK has been selling arms to the military dictatorship in Chile since 1980, the present campaign to gain favour is seen as an attempt to secure landing rights for aircraft en route to Port Stanley.

Mike Coren

Winnipeg test case

ON 5 OCTOBER Dr Henry Morgentaler, Canada's leading pro-abortion spokesman, will face charges of procuring or conspiring to procure abortions in his recently opened Winnipeg clinic. For the North American abortion lobby this test case is the culmination of a 15-year campaign.

Since 1969, abortion has only been legal in Canada if approved by a Therapeutic Abortion Council (TAC) on the grounds that continued pregnancy would endanger the patient's health. But in rural or Catholic areas many hospitals still have no abortion facilities, some have no TAC, and others use a quota system to limit the number of abortions they allow per year.

In 1970, Morgentaler's Montreal clinic was raided and he was arrested. Although acquitted by three successive juries he was imprisoned while waiting for appeal. Recently the anti-abortion organisations have become more militant, daubing Morgentaler's clinic (he is a survivor of Auschwitz) with anti-Semitic graffiti.

Undeterred, and with an estimated 82 per cent of the Canadian people supporting some form of legalised abortion, Morgentaler faces the October trial in a strong position. If the decision does go against him, a substantial part of the country's population will be supporting a change in the law.

Katie Campbell

More trouble at the Scrubs

NEWS IS emerging of continuing disturbances in West London's Wormwood Scrubs prison, following the neglect of a sick man in the punishment block. According to relatives and visitors, the prisoner was suffering from appendicitis. Although his screams of pain were heard all over the block, it was only after three hours of waiting that any officer responded.

During 'slopping out' the following day, the prisoners emptied their chamber pots over the supervising officers. This was followed by an attack on the fittings of the punishment block – during which, it is believed, the electric wiring was ripped out.

As a consequence of these events, Tommy Tangey and Larry Delaney – both already serving long sentences of solitary confinement for their part in previous protests – were moved to other prisons. None of the prisoners involved, however, has been charged with any offence. It is believed that this is to avoid any further publicity about events in the prison.

It is also becoming clear that large numbers of prisoners transferred from Albany prison on the Isle of Wight after the protest there in May are still being kept in solitary confinement. According to one legal source, not a single man transferred from Albany is back on 'normal location' – that is, out of solitary. And long-term Category A prisoners have in many cases been sent to local prisons without appropriate facilities.

Concern is also being expressed by friends about the whereabouts of prisoner Jimmy Mohan, who lost at least 600 days remission on a charge of mutiny. Mohan is illiterate. This means that, if he is in solitary he will not be able to get any other prisoner to write letters out for him. It is not known where he is being held and the authorities refuse to say.

Terry O'Halloran

Inside the Scrubs: three hours' screaming were unanswered

The Guardian

Undisclosed research

EVIDENCE has come to light which shows that Turner and Newall, the manufacturing company which has paid out substantial sums in recent years as the result of asbestosis claims, knew of the link between cancer and asbestos as early as 1943.

In 1936 six American asbestos companies hired Dr Leroy Gardner of the Saranac Laboratory in the State of New York to carry out experiments using rats and mice on the health effects of asbestos. Their plan was to control both the research and its publication. 'From time to time after the findings are made' wrote Sumner Simpson, president of Raybestos-Manhattan, the chief company involved, 'we can determine whether we wish any publication or not'.

One important finding, which most ceatainly did not fall into the publishable category, was that many of the animals used in the tests developed cancer. All of this was revealed in the United States in the 1970s in what came to be known as the 'Asbestos Pentagon Papers.'

What did not come out at the time was that the biggest British asbestos company, Turner and Newall, was fully involved in these experiments and aware of their findings. Head of Research at the time, Dr Francis, received a report from the American laboratores in 1943. In a note to his directors he said that 'the reference to the possibility of producing cancer of the lung by inhalation of asbestos fibres is disconcerting'.

When *NS* asked Turner and Newall when it first knew of the possible connection between asbestos and cancer, they replied 'the first reports of any signs was in the mid 1950s', and denied any knowledge of the 1943 paper. The new evidence suggests that the industry should have been alert to the dangers of asbestosis a full decade before it ever began to show any real concern. The incident also shows how industrial research is often more concerned with the commercial prospects of the companies involved than with the pure search for scientific truth.

Mike Coren

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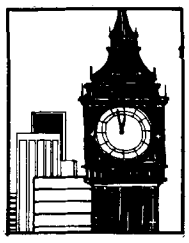

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

If at first you don't succeed, redefine success

IF YOU CAN remember that far back, try recalling how rosy Britain's economic prospects looked to the government before 9 June. The CBI was hopeful. The stock market was bullish. In his final budget speech in March, Sir Geoffrey Howe was practically ecstatic. Even that most embarrassing barometer of monetarism's impact on the British economy, the index of manufacturing output, was coming right. Howe proudly told MPs on budget day:

> Figures published today show a 2½ per cent rise in manufacturing production in January, which follows a 1 per cent rise in December. These are clear indications of recovery, and should be welcomed in all parts of this House.

It is one of the more curious features of Howe's tenure of the Treasury that whenever he drew attention to something going right, it promptly started to go wrong. In last year's budget speech he waxed eloquent about British industry's rapidly rising productivity. Within weeks – for all one can tell, within minutes – of Howe's remarks, industry's productivity performance resumed its normal, leisurely path.

So it has turned out this year with manufacturing and, indeed, with Howe's general economic prospectus. From an index figure of 86.8 last November (1975 = 100), manufacturing output jumped to 90.0 in January, just as Howe said. But since then it has remained stuck. Other things have started to go wrong, too. Interest rates have edged up. World trade has slowed down. And in the last few weeks just about every economic forecast – whether from the CBI, or the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, or the growing number of stockbrokers that provide forecasts for their clients – has come to the same conclusion. The British economy will grow more slowly next year than this; by next spring the present 'recovery' will have run out of steam.

Recovery, what recovery? With the unemployment queues growing (even Norman Tebbit admits that last month's dip in the heavily massaged figures is unlikely to be repeated for some time) and manufacturing output still bumping along at a level some 20 per cent lower than when Labour left office, the notion that we are currently experiencing a recovery at all seems a trifle far-fetched – the sort of idea that gives economic statistics a bad name. Yet if you try to tell a Treasury mandarin that it's all nonsense (and that at best we are experiencing a brief remission from a progressively debilitating disease) the chances are that he will pull out of his pocket the latest cyclical indicators and point proudly to the 'coincident' graph.

What cyclical indicators do, in essence, is provide a guide to the lurches of the economy between its peaks and troughs. When the economy is growing faster than normal it is shown to be in a recovery phase – moving from trough to peak – and when it is growing slower than normal it is shown to be moving from peak to trough. All of which may seem like a statement of the blindingly obvious; but there is a trap. It is into this trap that the government is trying to lure the unsuspecting public.

ACCORDING to the latest cyclical indicators the trough of Thatcher's recession was reached in May 1981. This was a significant date: just a few weeks after the most deflationary of Howe's budgets. If it is accepted that the economic recovery began soon afterwards, then the government will have gone some distance to vindicating its policies. What is more, the way that the cyclical indicators are calculated, it is quite possible that if economic growth next year slows to a crawl and manufacturing output stays depressed, and if the dole queues continue to lengthen, Britain will *still* technically be deemed to be recovering. Indeed, come March 1985 Mrs Thatcher may start claiming to be presiding over the longest-sustained economic recovery in recent times.

But, as I said, there is a trap. The official definition of recession and recovery compares the state of the economy to what is normal. The trap lies in the definition of what is 'normal'. Until the mid-1970s this was not an issue that caused sleepless nights among senior officials at the Central Statistical Office. For all I know it still doesn't; but it should.

During the 1950s and 1960s the normal, trend growth rate for the economy was a little under 3 per cent. This happened also to be broadly the growth rate that kept unemployment low and stable. (The growth rate may not have been fast enough, and productivity should have been rising more quickly; but that is another story.) Every year the economy grew a bit – even in the 'stop' phases of the stop-go cycles. But if, over a two or three-year period, the economy grew by only 1 or 2 per cent a year, it was counted as a downswing in the business cycle; the most tangible sign was rising unemployment. That is what happened between the 'peak' of December 1964 and the 'trough' of March 1967 – and also between May 1969 and February 1972. On both occasions, output in the trough was *higher* than at previous peak.

No longer is it so. The world has moved on, Thatcherism has arrived, and the CSO has revised its idea of what is 'normal'. Or, rather, the effect of retaining its traditional method of calculating normality has had that effect. The CSO's definition of normality is what happens over a five-year period. It calculates a moving average for each of the components of its indicators. Those averages then become the 'normal' benchmarks from which judgments about peaks and troughs, and downturns and upturns are made.

From the early 1950s to the mid-1970s these moving averages changed little: so the definition of 'normal' stayed much the same. But now it *has* changed. The five-year average of almost anything you measure these days shows either decline or stagnation. Consequently, a growth rate that was defined as deflationary when Edward Heath was Prime Minister is now deemed a recovery when Margaret Thatcher is in charge. It is as if a football referee, watching a team consistently shooting wide, were to decide to move the goalposts to produce a better score-line.

IN ITS ARCANE, meticulous way the CSO is providing the sort of data that helps the government to redefine economic success. Meanwhile, out in the real world, the underlying failure of the government's policies is, or ought to be, becoming ever more apparent. Of the batch of stockbrokers' economic assessments published this week, the most telling is published by Simon & Coates. Its commentary is starkly headlined *Britain's supply-side failure*. The point about monetarism, public spending cuts and reducing inflation, if you remember, was to help boost the 'supply-side': that is, to create the conditions in which private enterprise would innovate and grow.

It hasn't happened. As Simon & Coates say: 'Retail sales volume for durable household goods is running 20 per cent higher than it was in early 1981, but domestic output in the relevant sectors has hardly changed at all'. Somehow we are now supposed to believe that the recent record of Britain's economy is a testament to the success of 'supply-side economics'. Or perhaps not. Now I come to think of it, it must be a year or two since I last heard ministers use the term 'supply-side'. They seem to have dropped it from their vocabulary, and very sensibly too. Is it too much to hope that they will drop the term 'recovery' next. □

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ESPIONAGE

Spy in the sky

Duncan Campbell examines the long drawn-out electronic intelligence war between East and West, which was the background to last week's shooting down of the Korean Airlines jumbo

WHATEVER THE REASONS why last week's ill-fated flight KAL 007 was overflying such sensitive and prohibited areas of the Soviet Union, the incident will undoubtedly have provided US intelligence with unique data on the performance of the Soviet defence system. Gathering the type of intelligence the US will have gained is the primary task of the RC-135 type spy plane.

US officials inadvertently let slip at the beginning of the week that there had indeed been an RC-135 operating along the flight path of the Korean airliner. But they claim that it flew away from the area, and had landed an hour before the Soviets launched their missile attack on the jumbo jet.

US officials in Washington do not deny that the RC-135 and two other well-known American spy planes – the U2 and the SR71 – regularly fly along the borders of the Soviet Union with a battery of monitoring devices aboard. All three types of aircraft operate from the US airbase at Mildenhall in Suffolk, and from other bases in Greece, Cyprus, Turkey and Okinawa. From Mildenhall, the *New Statesman* has obtained some startling evidence of the clandestine role of the RC-135 and other planes in the US spy fleet.

- On 16 January 1982, an RC-135V spy plane returning from Athens to its US home base landed at Mildenhall. On its nose were seen five small red silhouettes of the distinctively long-nosed Soviet Sukhoi interceptor (such as were involved in last week's incident). Such markings normally celebrate a 'kill'. But since RC-135s are unarmed, except for electronic jammers, aviation experts say that the markings, if they are Sukhois, are most likely to mean that the aircraft had successfully penetrated Soviet defences – and got away with it.
- Despite promising to refrain from *manned* overflight of the Soviet Union in 1960, planes like the SR71 do regularly 'taunt' Soviet fighters to try and shoot them down, according to Viktor Belenko, the Soviet pilot who defected to Japan in 1976, bringing his Mig-25 with him.
- Mildenhall's SR71 unit has recently been increased to two aircraft. But US spokesmen at Mildenhall say that they 'don't acknowledge that there are any reconnaissance aircraft' on the base. Since early this year, United States national markings have been removed from the all-black planes.
- Clumsy attempts to disguise clandestine operations with RC-135s from Mildenhall have been detected by local aircraft spotters who have noticed on at least two occasions that false serial numbers had been painted onto one RC-135. This was first done about seven years ago, and again in 1982. An RC-135'V' was temporarily given the tail serial number – 14848 – belonging to a distinctively different 'U' type. On 3/4 July last year, this manoeuvre was easy to detect when both planes were parked side by side.
- The RC-135s, which first came to Britain about 1966, succeeded earlier types which are known to have penetrated Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and have been shot down. The Royal Air Force and the British Secret Intelligence Service have been deeply involved with the secret US overflights, including the U2s, since the late 1940s.

We asked the United States Third Air Force spokesmen at Mildenhall to comment on and explain the reports. On Tuesday, they promised to 'research' the questions but insisted that they were not admitting that spy planes were ever seen at Mildenhall. An SAC headquarters representative, Major Mahoney, said on Tuesday that 'we can't comment on operational missions'.

In the face of the rapid polarisation of the KAL incident into a critical Soviet-American issue, it is understandable that US officials are vigorously seeking to repudiate the Soviet claim that the dead passengers were the victims of a US intelligence operation that went wrong. But the US claim that their RC-135 in the area was quietly slipping home – uninterested in what was going on – is not credible.

Additional research by Claudia Wright in Washington.

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For decades, the United States, the Soviet Union and their allies have fought a secret electronic war in which radar and anti-aircraft defence screens are repeatedly penetrated in order to discover how they operate – and how, in war, to evade them. This dangerous activity has been much more extensive than is generally known. An analysis of this secret war shows that since 1950 the United States has lost at least 27 aircraft forced or shot down and seen 60 others attacked in the course of electronic or photographic reconnaissance activity. At least 139 US servicemen have died in this reconnaissance programme.

The high-flying spy plane, the SR71, is no respecter of national boundaries or legal airspace restrictions. More than 900 attempts have been made, by the Soviet Air Force and others, to shoot down the super-secret SR-71 'Blackbird'. None has succeeded, for it flies too high and too fast. It replaced the slow-flying, glider-like U2 spy plane in which CIA pilot Gary Powers was shot down near Sverdlovsk in May 1960.

When flying off the coast of Soviet Asia, the primary mission of the RC-135 spy plane is to document the 'electronic order of battle' of the Soviet defenders. The Americans want to know where the radar stations and anti-aircraft missile bases are and how defences will react if the Soviet Union is penetrated by B52 nuclear bombers. But often, important defence systems are turned off to prevent just such eavesdropping. Thus for decades such spy missions have involved deliberate 'provocative penetration', designed to measure Soviet alertness and monitor the response.

For the Elint (electronic intelligence) analysts of US Strategic Air Command, last week's Korean incursion will have provided a treasure trove of electronic gold. A chain of US listening stations is dotted across the northern coast of Hokkaido Island, Japan, including such huge eavesdropping centres as Misawa Air Base with 1,600 intelligence operators and analysts. They routinely listen to and monitor radio signals between Soviet pilots and their ground controllers. Both sides know what the other is doing; on one occasion at least, Soviet radio operators included a Christmas greeting to the specific US station in Japan which was monitoring them.

The Korean jumbo jet would have been closely followed by the US and Japanese Sigint (signals intelligence) stations. The Soviet Union was being deeply penetrated by a large unidentified aircraft which was crossing the highly sensitive Kamchatka pen-

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insula on a course for Vladivostock. In the course of two hours in the early morning, large parts of the Soviet military command and electronic defence systems were suddenly activated. Gathering that part of this sudden intelligence windfall accessible only from the air should have been the job of the RC-135. The US government has not revealed whether other Elint monitors, included a Christmas greeting to a specific US monitoring station in Japan.

THE ELECTRONIC spy mission of the RC-135s has been well described by senior US Air Force officials and others. The leading US military journal *Aviation Week and Space Technology* explained in May 1976 that the SR71s and RC-135s fly:

> peripheral intelligence missions . . . to pinpoint locations and characteristics of potentially hostile signal emitters . . . Information of this nature helps (Strategic Air Command) to develop ways of evading troublesome emitters . . .

The reason for all this activity is unambiguously offensive. The purpose is to analyse:

> the environment that bombers may be directed to penetrate in the event of war . . .

While the Korean airliner's unaccompanied penetration could not be mistaken for a lone attacking bomber, it is understandable that the Soviet Air Force might be trigger-happy if it suspected that the ill-fated Boeing 747 might be a US Air Force RC-135 lining up a possible bombing run.

During a flight of up to 17 hours, automatic Elint computers on the RC-135 record Soviet radar signals on reels of 1 inch magnetic tape. When the plane returns to base computers use the tapes to provide an up-to-date map of Soviet radar stations. Prominent on the RC-135 are flat panels near the nose, which carry 'sideways looking' radar. This produces maps to help bombers and cruise missiles navigate to their targets.

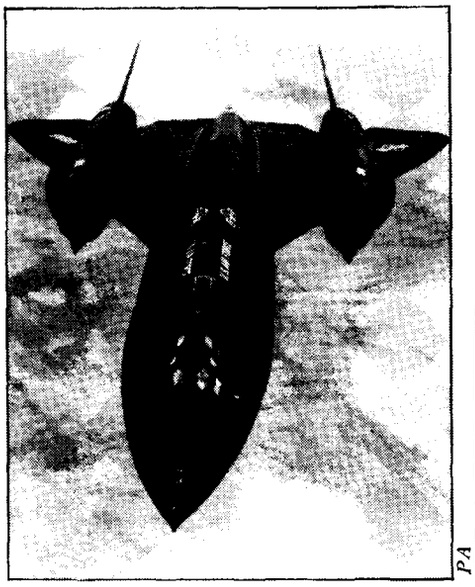
'Provoking' air defence systems is necessary in order to 'trigger' interesting signals, as the then commander of Strategic Air Command, General R. H. Ellis, indicated to the official *Air Force Magazine* in September 1978. Refering to the RC-135, U2, and SR71, he said:

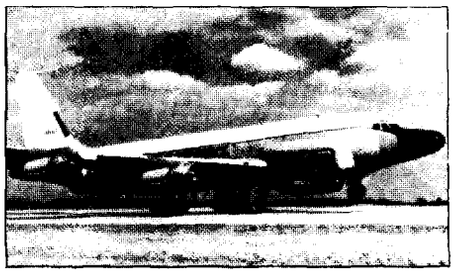
> It is possible to operate these systems in a way that induces the 'other fellow' to react in a way that tells us things we want to know. This can't be done with satellites.

The former Soviet Mig-25 interceptor pilot Viktor Belenko has described in his autobiography how this was done by the SR71s; they flew off the coast of the Soviet Union:

> taunting and toying with Mig-25s sent up to intercept them, scooting up to altitudes the Soviet planes could not reach and circling leisurely above them, or dashing off at speeds the Russians could not match.

The SR71 flew faster even than Soviet air-to-air missiles and could not be shot down. SR71s repeatedly overflew China during the 1960s. After Chinese protest notes, this activity was stopped before President Nixon's 1971 visit. A former US Air Force Sigint analyst, has explained how the SR71s would just disappear from the view of Mig-21 interceptors. Egypt protested about SR71 overflights during the Yom Kippur war; meanwhile Soviet Mig-25s successfully overflew Israel at high speed.





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Top: The record breaking SR71 is the world's fastest plane and has flown between London and New York in less than two hours. No other aircraft can intercept it, allowing the US to send its spy planes almost anywhere. Middle: RC-135 electronic intelligence aircraft is a military conversion of the civil Boeing 707 type. Flat panels in the nose carry sidelooking radar to map attack routes for bombers and cruise missiles. Bottom: U2 spy planes returned to Upper Heyford in 1964 to carry out high altitude 'weather research'.

In 1979 the government secretly gave permission for SR71s to be based in Britain. Companion U2s have disappeared from Mildenhall since, in January this year, newly manufactured U2s – renamed TR1s – started arriving at Alconbury air base, near Huntingdon. Three or four out of an expected total of 20 TR1s are currently stationed at Alconbury. There are usually two RC-135s at Mildenhall, on long visits from the Strategic Air Command's 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing in Nebraska.

SPY PLANES FROM this and similar units have been coming to Britain for years. RAF and USAF pilots based at Sculthorpe, near Fakenham in Norfolk, shared spy missions to map bombing routes into Eastern Europe between 1951 and 1954. The first U2s operated from the US air base at Lakenheath, before moving to Turkey. RAF pilots also flew on U2 missions over the Soviet Union. Decorations and medals were awarded to RAF pilots for successful penetration operations, which were kept a well-guarded secret.

In 1958, two Oxford undergraduates who had worked in British Sigint stations in West Germany were jailed for publicly describing the provocative penetration missions in a university magazine:

> Since the Russians do not always provide the required messages to monitor, they are sometimes provoked. A planes 'loses' its way; while behind the frontier tape recorders excitedly read the irritated messages of Russian pilots; and when sometimes the aeroplane is forced to land an international incident is created. The famous Lancaster bomber incident near Berlin was deliberately provoked in this way.

Soon after this was written, there was to be a succession of major international incidents of this kind:

- 27 June 1958 – CIA spy plane was shot down in the Caucasus, with nine men aboard. A secret briefing to President Eisenhower about the incident was only declassified nine months ago.
- 2 September 1958 – spy plane carrying 17 National Security Agency monitors shot down over Soviet Armenia.
- 11 May 1960 – U2 shot down over the Urals – the famous incident.
- 1 July 1960 – RB47 (predecessor to the RC-135), from Brize Norton near Oxford, shot down in the Barents Sea area; as in many such incidents, the Soviet and US sides disagreed on whether the plane had encroached on national airspace.
- 28 January 1964 – T-39 shot down over East Germany.
- 10 March 1964 – RB-66 from Alconbury shot down over East Germany.

Losses have continued at a more modest rate since. Soviet losses as a result of their parallel activity of this kind are not known. But the risk-taking goes on. Apart from the exotic devices like the SR71, there are still continual spy flights over East Germany by simulated US transport aircraft flying to Berlin. Codenamed 'Creek Misty', these are actualy C130E Hercules spy planes. Only six months ago, an RAF Hercules flying the same route was shot at by East German interceptors.

US sources, including the former Commander-in-chief of Pacific forces, Admiral Noel Gayler, are angrily dismissive of suggestions that the Korean airliner was deliberately used by the Americans to stir Soviet defences. But it is clear that the airline passengers have been innocent victims of a long, secret, electronic cold war in the air. □

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Make the Party work

John Garrett asks questions that have been raised before, but mostly ignored. See also Feedback on page 14

THREE ARTICLES in the *New Statesman* earlier in the summer (*NS* 8, 15 and 22 July) gave us some telling examples of some of the shortcomings of the Parliamentary Labour Party, the Walworth Road head office and the policy activities of the TUC. As somebody who has studied these matters from time to time, I found the observations perfectly accurate, but the articles did not fully bring out the interconnexions between these institutions nor, naturally enough, were their authors required to construct an overall view of the organisational issues the Party has to face. There is a long list of questions which have to be answered, primarily by the National Executive Committee, before we can rebuild the Party in a systematic way.

The Labour Party still has the basic structure of a large and powerful organisation, capable of being used not only as a vehicle for returning Labour governments and Labour local councils, but as an immensely powerful force for political education and reform. It still has the main elements of a channel of communication and political action to and from the offices of the General Secretary and the Leader of the Opposition and every citizen in the country. We may not have much time left to make it work: it could be rebuilt, or it could cease to function as a national institution quite soon.

To operate effectively, any organisation – even a political organisation – has to define and state its aims, spell these aims out as specific objectives and priorities and then devise structures, relationships with other bodies, and programmes of action in pursuit of those objectives. The central problem in the Labour Party is that the NEC has no interest in the management of the Party, but only in 'policy' (or, more precisely, in arbitrating on adversarial and sectarian views of policy). It has never tackled its organisational responsibilities in this way. So it has interpreted and developed the policy guidelines given by Conference in great (and often irrelevant) detail, but has not taken the trouble to see that the means exist to inform the Party at large of policy development, or that the machinery exists to mobilise the Party or the public in support of policy.

Why should anyone join the Party? In many areas of the country it is quite difficult to join. An intending member has to find the local party secretary and, if he or she persists, might get a membership form.

Once they are in the Party, they have the privilege of sitting in a draughty hall (or, worse still, somebody's front room) where they will either be bored stiff or harangued by some barrack-room lawyer or loony. If they live in the South, they may never see a Labour MP, or national officer of the party. Why can't a new member receive a welcoming letter from the General Secretary or the Leader and a starter pack of literature about the Party or its policies? What happened to the new consultative procedure of a couple of years ago in which every member, or branch meeting attender, could express a view about policy before it was set in concrete?

Why are most local parties penniless? How is it that there is a full-time agent and premises for every local party in Norfolk and Suffolk (and a professional fund-raiser in the Eastern Region), but only one agent for the West Midlands? Purely an historical accident? Can we learn nothing from the organisation and management of the Norwich Labour Party and Club with its ten staff and £250,000 turnover? How many members of the NEC have taken the trouble to find out how Arthur Clare runs the Norwich party? Not long ago, one member of the NEC dismissed the East Anglian organisation as 'a freak' from which no lessons could be drawn. Some of our leaders say that organisation does not matter. After all, we win Northern cities without any and didn't we just lose both the Norwich seats? The fact remains that we have controlled the Norwich City Council for 50 years (compare similar cities in the South and East) and that city is a lesson in Labour administration held in place by good organisation.

WHY IS THE national party bankrupt? Has the management ever tried to raise money for it in a systematic way other than by begging from the unions? How can a national institution with hundreds of thousands of members be bankrupt? Why can't the membership list be used for commercial enterprise and marketing? For a Labour book or record club, for a Labour travel agency, for other mail order ventures? Some large commercial organisations exist only by having a list of subscribers or interested people. The reason is that there is no national membership list, nor can there be while the constitution establishes that members belong only to a local party. Is it impossible to put all members, or even those who have indicated their willingness, on a central computer and address them personally from time to time?

Never mind the content of policy, what about the machinery for making it? Why do we discuss often meaningless composite motions at Conference instead of properly marshalled amendments to the Programme, taken chapter by chapter? Why do we sling together the reports of 40 or so subcommittees and working parties into a Programme without a careful review of the priorities and the inconsistencies and ambiguities and downright impracticalities, let alone the cost, of those reports in aggregate?

"I KNOW THIS IS THE A.G.M.... BUT KISS ME ANYWAY...."

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Labour's enormous Programme 1982 included pledges on everything from unilateral disarmament to accurate meters in district heating schemes and state assistance to promote fish as a fine quality food. For my own amusement, I went through that Programme noting its total implications for the machinery of government. I found dozens, scores, of new quangos, boards, agencies, commissions and departments adding up to an organisational requirement which any government simply could not construct nor staff. Clearly, nobody on the NEC – not even the Machinery of Government sub-Committee of the Home Policy Committee – had ever thoroughly carried out the exercise, yet the problem could have stopped a Labour government in its tracks.

Much of the criticism of the Party is levelled at the Walworth Road head office and most of it is grossly unfair. Too often, members of the NEC are unwilling or unable to defend it. It was headquarters staff who campaigned for the 1971 'O and M' study of head office by a firm of management consultants and who have agitated for reform ever since (and so have the dwindling corps of professional agents). One crucial need in head office, at least until the appointment of Jim Mortimer as General Secretary, was to strengthen and support its admininstration and financial management: hence the recommendation in the 1971 study and later reports for the appointment of a Finance (and Administration) Director – a 'business manager'. The massive demands of representational and fund raising duties on a General Secretary have always in the past meant that there has been difficulty in assessing financial priorities, budgeting and planning, particularly given the refusal of the NEC to tackle these issues.

As the *NS* articles pointed out, the Labour Party is an organisation in which major issues of policy and management are batted between a number of semi-independent players: the Conference, the NEC and its staff, the unions and the PLP. No consistent objectives or plan link them together. The PLP has never had a clear role in the enterprise other than to oppose or support the government. I dare say that it is impossible to specify the job of a Labour MP, but I would have thought it possible to give an opportunity to MPs to develop their role in terms of activity in the House, supporting local parties, making a contribution to policy. I am pleased to see that the PLP has set up a group to study its activities. I hope that study will not just try to improve what it does now, but will discuss the fundamental aim how to maximise the contribution of the PLP to the return of a Labour government and seek to invent new procedures and arrangements to achieve it.

We've had several enquiries in the last 12 years and their recommendations have been ignored. Until we get an NEC that is willing to devote a large part of its time to the management of the Party, absolutely nothing will be done. The presumption must be that it will not, though the shock of our Parliamentary defeat and the arrival of a new leader might just be able to persuade it to stop and think about these matters. □

John Garrett was Labour MP for Norwich South from 1974 to 1983 and has written extensively on industry, management and government.

UNIONS

Captive organs

Francis Beckett reviews TU journals

INSIDE THE EDITOR of your trade union newspaper there is probably a journalist screaming to get out. Most of them were at TUC headquarters last month to see three of their number win the TUC's annual union journal competition. Clive Bush, editor of the Civil and Public Servants Association (CPSA) paper, *Red Tape*, accepted his award with a one-line speech: 'The press conference will be outside in ten minutes'.

For Bush is this year's symbol of the often uneasy relationship between union journalists and their masters. After the election, he printed a front page picture of Margaret Thatcher opposite a passage from the Conservative manifesto: 'It is a tribute to this spirit of co-operation that the number of civil servants has been reduced from 732,000 to 649,000 . . .' He was in trouble for his huge one-word caption: SUCKERS!

'If I'd been consulted about it, I'd probably have done everything possible to stop it', said CPSA General Secretary Alastair Graham, who disowned it in a letter to branches. 'Many of our members did not vote Labour and may have felt the union was insulting them'.

Journalists have seized on the row as an issue of press freedom. Union editors and General Secretaries, who have circled warily around each other for years, know better. 'I'd rather be instructed by a trade union General Secretary than by Rupert Murdoch', says one editor. 'I don't want to tell my editor what to do. Presenting the news ought to be left to the professional, not the General Secretary who has other things to do', says the TGWU's Moss Evans.

Alastair Graham insists he doesn't want to be a 'backdrop editor': 'I would like to be told what the major feature is about, but not see its wording. I would like to see the editorial. But I want to leave the final judgement to the editor. If the journal is going to be alive, the editor must be independent. I want a journal the members read. That means the editor must have independence. He must take risks'.

So why the conflict? In fact most union editors have to walk a tightrope. When Gus Brain involuntarily left UCATT soon after the arrival of a new General Secretary and, more recently, Bob Houston found that he had been de-selected as editor the day that Arthur Scargill was elected miners' President, no one doubted for a moment their professional competence. Their services were quickly sought by other unions.

Editors are often the interface between General Secretaries – who think editing of their words is a crime – and lay members, who see the editor as a paid hack of the union hierarchy. Sometimes the editor becomes little more than the person who specifies typefaces and makes the pages fit. In unions like the NUR, SOGAT, the POEU and the SCPS, every line of copy is closely vetted by the General Secretary, or another top official, or an editorial board, or sometimes all three.

No union editor wants absolute freedom. Most want what Moss Evans calls 'a relationship of trust'. Union papers link members and leaders. Boring ones aren't read. Mouthpieces for General Secretaries or other internal factions, papers which suppress news and criticism, are read cynically. At a time when loyalty of union members cannot be taken for granted, the wrong sort of newspaper is a costly vanity.

Yet it is hard for union officials and lay activists to learn to trust the journalists they employ; to differentiate between the *Sun* journalist, paid to pillory them, whom they can't control, and the journalist they pay, whom they can control but need to learn to use.

One union thinks it's found the solution – the NUJ, which elects its editor and gives him or her absolute freedom. Billed as the ultimate in press freedom, those journalists who support the idea have canvassed it around other unions, but it's been cold-shouldered even by most editors themselves. For that much-abused phrase 'press freedom' cannot just mean the untrammelled right of an editor to include and exclude material, regardless of all other considerations. A union paper would then cease to belong to the union as a whole.

Yet the uneasy and sometimes vainglorious checking for blandness and ideological purity that still goes on in some union offices helps ensure that the trade union press, with over 100 papers and, notionally at least, over five million readers, does not fulfil its potential.

These are a few hopeful signs that unions are reorganising themselves to make better use of their journals. The TGWU, never in the past a byword for lively publicity, has for the first time appointed a full-time editor at national officer level – and one with a record of campaigning journalism.

But there are still also despairing signs – and few worse than those coming out of Labour Party headquarters in Walworth Road. Since the election, Mr Jim Mortimer seems to have put himself at the head of those who equate talk of professionalism in publicity matters with betrayal of the movement. The tragedy is that Labour has the ammunition. Used properly, and professionally it could show that Saatchi and Saatchi are not invincible. □

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Blueprint for democratic schools

Professor Colin MacCabe looks back at the successes and failures of the 'comprehensive' experiment and puts forward his own radical proposal for our secondary educational system

DURING THE RECENT election campaign the Tory party took advertisements in the national press which emphasised ten points of policy on which the electoral programmes of the Labour and Communist parties were in agreement. Prominent among them was the Labour Party's commitment to abolish the public schools.

It is, of course, no surprise that the Tory party is committed to a private education system which does so much to perpetuate and reproduce our ruling élite in all its ignorant and inefficient isolation. What is surprising is that the Tory party can now assume that the defence of public schools is a vote winner for large sections of the electorate.

The ability of the Tory party to use the issue of private education as it did this summer marks a real watershed in the contemporary history of education, ending a period of 40 years which reaches back to the 1944 Butler Education Act. It is absolutely essential that we find ways of powerfully restating the argument in favour of comprehensive education. But such a restatement must take account of the failures as well as the successes that have marked the years since Crosland's famous 'comprehensive' circular of 1965.

The Left's defence of the comprehensive idea is crippled by the inability to admit to previous failures. And as the Left tries ever more vainly to defend the indefensible, educational policy is increasingly dominated by the most reactionary arguments. In the mid-seventies, as comprehensivisation was vigorously extended, most direct grant and some grammar schools opted to leave the state system. This increase in the quality of private education has now been confirmed by deliberate government policy with the assisted places scheme. This scheme, which grants government subsidy to children who have gained places at private schools but whose parents cannot afford the fees, can only help children coming from homes in which education is already considered a high priority, justifying extra effort and extra tuition.

It really is no exaggeration to say that, if (and it's quite a big 'if') this scheme continues in operation over the next five years, we face the debilitating and depressing prospect that almost all the children most suited to academic forms of education will be educated in the private system. It is not that the number of those in private schools has grown significantly. What is important is that the private sector is in a position to set the educational agenda.

In the 20 years that followed the Butler Education Act it was the grammar schools which set the educational priorities in the public schools. It is now the public schools that will increasingly be taken as the norm against which comprehensive schools must be judged.

How on earth do we find ourselves in this genuinely tragic is slightly ludicrous situation? How can a policy designed to achieve greater equality in education produce greater inequality?

Undoubtedly the most tempting explanation is one that blames the Labour Party for its failure in the mid-sixties to make any real political or economic commitment to the new forms of education. But blaming the Labour Party ignores the serious weaknesses in the original arguments for comprehensive schools. Above all the argument about equality of opportunity failed at any point to engage seriously with the structures of inequality within our society. There is no sector more complacently responsible for the loss of those arguments than the universities.

WHEN THE LABOUR Party came to power in 1964, it was pledged to introduce comprehensive education on a national scale. This pledge had a considerable measure of popular support but, with the benefits of twenty years of hindsight, we can see how that support depended on some very confused arguments. At that time, the political argument about comprehensive schools very largely turned on the 11-plus exam. It was clear by 1964 that the 11-plus was simply not accurate enough to use as a basis on which to divide children educationally.

It was this negative argument which was politically decisive for the comprehensive schools. The corresponding positive argument was a curious plea for an egalitarian meritocracy – the very phrase is a contradiction in terms. As a teenager campaigning for the Labour Party in 1964 and 1966, it seemed to me that we were ushering in the New Jerusalem. The comprehensive was to be the crucial element in the construction of a meritocracy. It would allow everyone, whatever their social background, access to the benefits of education.

It was this new form of school which would finally produce an equality of opportunity in the field of education. This argument, which seemed so convincing then, chose to ignore the complexity of the relations between culture, politics and economics. First, it assumed a uniformity of culture within this country. Even if you assume, which I now certainly don't, that such a uniformity might be a desirable goal, it is not the current reality of British life.

In this context the comprehensive school was inevitably conceived as 'a grammar school for all' with very little thought as to whether the grammar school itself was the correct model for a democratic educational system. The comprehensive school was thus born under some very bad signs – incapable of achieving the political or educational goals it had been set. It was meant to usher in an era of social equality at a time when developments within the economy were leading to greater inequality. At the same time it was more or less saddled with a curriculum taken from the grammar schools.

It is absolutely essential, if one is to consider seriously the future of education in this country, to be clear about the past. One cannot repeat too often that the grammar school died before it was killed. Social and cultural changes ensured, at least from the point of view of the arts, that the grammar school curriculum had become a hollow joke by the end of the sixties. Our current tragedy is that the consequences of that death have never been confronted. As a result we find ourselves faced with a choice betweem half-born comprehensives and half-dead public schools.

THE CURRICULUM remains that of the grammar school in whatever attenuated or ridiculous form. In both State and private schools we find a curriculum which is increasingly distant from the pupils' experience. Let us take, as an example, the much discussed questions of the ability to write. I am totally in agreement with those who feel that there has been a national decline in literacy, but it is not limited to those in comprehensive schools. Teaching English in universities, one finds that even the most gifted of pupils with the most privileged of schooling can find real difficulty in coping with complex sentences or propositions. The conservative educationalist will tell you that what is needed is more grammar and discipline; the progressive will, with equal certainty, assure you that it is relevance and compassion that are necessary. What both ignore is the changed status of writing in our culture. Writing continues to be the central method of communication for the exercise of political and administrative power. Not to be able to write is to be disfranchised as a citizen. However, writing no longer occupies that central place which it has held since the Renaissance. The developments of televi-

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Sally & Richard Greenhill

Comprehensive pupil: prisoner of an irrelevant curriculum

sion and rock music (and of film, radio and the telephone before that) have marked a profound shift in our culture in favour of certain uses of voice and gesture, which had long been surbordinate to writing. To teach the skills of writing today it is necessary to start from the recognition that kids in the 1980s spend much less time reading than watching television or listening to records.

What has, of course changed in state schools is the method of selection. So influential have been the studies on the personal suffering and social injustice of academic selection that comprehensives have, in the main, done everything they could to minimise it. Particularly in urban areas, mixed ability classes were considered the desirable goal for the comprehensive school.

The rationale for mixed ability teaching is twofold. The negative argument talks of the damaging effect on children of being classified as academic failures and seeks to avoid any such classification. The positive argument seeks to move the discussion away from ability and to argue that every child brings its own different and valuable experience to the classroom.

Both of these arguments simply ignore the important question of those children whose intellectual ability makes them particularly good at theoretical work. There is absolutely no doubt that these children can achieve better academic results when taught together in streams of sets. There is also no doubt that it is mixed ability teaching which is responsible for so much of the public dissatisfaction with comprehensives. In fact, there is much less mixed ability teaching in comprehensives than is commonly supposed. However, mixed ability teaching does pinpoint the contradictions of the comprehensive system, the way in which it manages to get the worst of both worlds. The comprehensives teach an increasingly irrelevant curriculum, but can't teach it as well as the private schools because of their unwillingness to focus on the more intellectually able children.

It's here that we can grasp the central problem of the comprehensive school. Knowledge indeed is power and the comprehensive school would place everyone in an equal relation to knowledge. But it is ludicrous to think that the personal and social differences which affect our relations to knowledge, the abilities we are born with and the houses we grow up in, can simply be erased by our schooling. The justification of the comprehensive school does not lie in some social-democratic Utopia, as unattainable as it is undesirable, in which all differences have finally disappeared. We need to fight for comprehensives so that all children from whatever class or race can be brought together in a common school. Indeed this is the success of comprehensives to date.

I DO NOT WANT to involve myself in the argument about declining standards. The inadequacy of the whole debate can be easily summed up by looking at the opinion polls – which on the one hand show a majority of parents convinced that standards have declined, while on the other hand 80 per cent of those same parents think that their child is getting a good education. Given the irrelevance of the current curriculum either to contemporary experience or to genuine learning, that whole debate seems to miss the point completely.

My own opinion, for what it's worth, is that the majority of children in this country are now taught with more care and attention than twenty years ago. The real success of comprehensive schools comes out in conversations with teachers. They are convinced, deeply convinced, that their pupils are learning valuable skills which do not figure in exam results. Within the comprehensives, for the first time in our educational history, secondary pupils are encouraged to value their own experiences and their own lives – even if these experiences can find no evident expression within the approved academic curriculum.

It is a great mistake to think that the only thing that matters in school is the formal teaching of classes. School kids learn just as much from each other as they do from their teachers. Punk, the most important cultural movement of the seventies – a genuine attempt by unemployed kids to gain some control over their own lives, over their sounds and their images – seems to me one of the most encouraging first fruits of the comprehensive school. But if, as I surmise, the democratic experience of the comprehensive school fostered punk, this democracy is of little account if it does not feed into and transform the centres of power and influence within our society.

If the experience gained within the comprehensive school cannot make itself felt in the centres of the culture, particularly in the universities and the media, then it will, like punk, remain marginal – a sub-culture without any real effect on the dominant culture. Left thinking about educational politics in Britain has been content on the whole with a levelling egalitarianism which has refused to confront, and thus made much more powerful, the structures of inequality within our national culture.

There are, however, other socialist traditions which provide more useful ways of thinking about the relation between education, politics and culture. The Italian Communist leader Antonio Gramsci had no doubt that a culture had a whole network of 'directive centres'; and that these directive centres had to be transformed rather than abolished. It is in this context that one can seriously confront the vexed question of the public schools in Britain.

For over 20 years now the Labour Party has been pledged to abolish such schools, and for over 20 years it has been quite clear that no Labour government will ever undertake such a measure. It is absolutely imperative to grasp the urgency of the argument that the public school cannot – really cannot – continue in its present form.

The thrust of the argument is not about unwarranted privileges, or about necessary freedoms. There are many unwarranted privileges within our society which do relatively little harm to others; and our freedoms in relation to our children have been very successfully limited from the days of the great Victorian campaigns against child labour and in favour of compulsory education. What is so disastrous about public schools in their present form is the way in which they allow the ruling élite to exclude themselves from national life. The most obvious segregation occurs at childhood, when the children of the dominant class are excluded in their public life at school from

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any contact with other classes, or races.

An even more important segregation occurs when parents send their children to private schools and, by investing all their commitment in school fees, abdicate from the crucial debates about education in the public sector. The State sector is thus deprived of the most articulate and powerful parents in the community. But to advocate the simple abolition of public schools, as the Labour Party has effectively been content to do, is to ignore the evident fact that the best of them have the teachers and the resources to provide an excellent theoretical education.

At the moment those possibilities of excellence are severely limited by the curriculum with which these private schools are forced to work. The best of the public schools provide an evident solution to many of the current problems in State education. Particularly, given the difference in the ages at which so many of them accept pupils (13 instead of 11), the public schools provide a ready-made addition to the State system – as academic centres of excellence which would recruit their non-fee paying pupils at 14 by competition from common schools. These common schools, these truly comprehensive schools, would be attended by all of the population and would limit any streaming before 14 to mathematics and languages. Not only would this provide the directive centres which the educational system requires, if the advantages of the comprehensive system are to permeate through the culture, but it would also draw into the State system both the parents and pupils which are vital to its democratic operation.

There are two inevitable objections which will be raised against this proposal within the Labour party. The first, and most easily predictable, is that the children selected at 14 would be predominantly middle-class. All the experience of western educational systems suggest that this is the likely outcome. However, there is a very major difference between a form of recruitment into the directive centres of our educational system, which is explicitly based on class position and financial power, and one which uses acedemic competition as its criterion. The important social advance would be to have drawn both children and parents into an educational democracy.

The second, and much the more important objection, would be to ask what will happen to the 95 per cent of children who are not selected at 14? Even if they have enjoyed the benefits of education in a common school to 14, won't they nonetheless at 14 find themselves second-class citizens? The answer to this objection lies in a thorough-going reform of post-14 education, which would both lower the school leaving age to 14 and combine the institutions of secondary, further and higher education to offer a wide variety of academic and vocational courses. No one over 14 should have to follow any educational courses, but everyone should have the right to seven years further education after the age of 14, to be taken when the student desires.

To suggest the exact form of this reorganisation would be the work of a whole Royal Commission. To indicate the practical problems, one has only to think of the effect on unemployment figures of lowering the age to 14. And I must stress that the crucial innovation must be to involve the universities fully in the problems of the secondary system. For 20 years now, the universities have maintained an attitude of effortless superiority, contenting themselves with pessimistic denunciations of the schools and the teachers. It is, however, the universities who must take the major responsibility for the failures of our curriculum and, above all, for the ridiculously early age at which specialisation is required.

British university education rests on a reputation gained in the past. The reality, certainly in the arts, is of courses which are increasingly fatuous both in their demands on, and their examination of, students. To undertake the necessary reforms of their own courses, British universities should act in concert with their local institutions of both secondary and further education. To achieve such concert it will be necessary for the government to provide certain kinds of incentives and penalties.

The educational blueprint that I am offering here is radical in its scope and unfashionable in its optimism. We face a long period in which any attempt to improve education will be met with scorn and ridicule. But, even if it takes ten years, it is vital by then to have persuaded large sections of the population of the validity of our arguments.

The long period that we face in opposition is one in which we can seriously think about long term policy in a way that moves us from 1945 to the year 2000. Such a task is not a luxury but a necessity.

The major problem facing Britain over the next 20 years is racism. If our dominant class continues to educate itself in segregated schools, then the failures of our educational policies will not simply be a matter of concern for those professionally involved in education. The effects will make themselves violently felt in everybody's lives. We need an education system which can genuinely promote an equal society. It is not possible (and this is the mistake of much comprehensive ideology) to create an equal society through education.

What can be done is to create a society in which there is respect for the experience of others and value for one's own. Such respect and such value might lead to further and more startling changes, but already in themselves they offer the opportunity for a society in which equality is more than a legal fiction, if less than an economic reality – a sense of equality which would inform our view of both ourselves and others. □

Colin MacCabe is Professor of English Studies at Strathclyde University. This article is an edited version of his Opinion *broadcast on Wednesday on Channel 4.*

FEEDBACK

to our series ***Debating the Future of Socialism***

Why nationalised industries work

James Ogilvy-Webb, Chairman, Public Enterprise Group

In his article on the Future of Socialism (*NS* 2 Sept.), Mervyn Jones attacks 'the sacred cow of nationalisation'. Nationalised industries may not be intrinsically socialist, but without them there is no hope for a prosperous, socialist Britain. Socialism does not mean progressive impoverishment of the majority, which is what the private sector is achieving.

Like so many commentators, Mervyn Jones makes no mention of the economic decay of this country. Britain's gross domestic product per head is now substantially lower than that of Germany, France, Belgium, Holland and Japan. On current trends we shall soon be poorer than Italy and Spain. Our present situation is due to the incompetence and lack of foresight of the private sector, including the backwardness of private steel and shipbuilding, two industries which were only saved from extinction by nationalisation. The private sector is bad at investment, bad at developing new products, and very bad about industrial relations. The complaints by employers about their workforce do not seem to apply when Japanese factories are opened in Britain. The industrial disputes in nationalised industries, on the other hand, are almost entirely due to the problems of redundancy, except in BL, which, though nationalised, is still run by the traditional kind of British managers who were responsible for its original collapse.

The fact is that the nationalised industries: 1) invest more than the private sector; 2) are better at training their employees; 3) do more research and development; 4) take longer-term views; 5) act in the national interest and cannot pass into foreign hands; 6) pay decent wages; 7) have a high standard of morality, i.e. they are honest; 8) socialise economic rents; 9) take trouble about safety. The great utilities – gas, electricity and Telecom – are modern and go-ahead, which is why the government wants to privatise them, so as to provide an easy income for its rentier friends, who don't like risking their money in incompetent private industry.

If the British economy is to recover and to become reasonably efficient, it is the nationalised industries that are needed to spearhead the drive for efficiency. It is true that the treatment of consumers by some nationalised industries is high-handed. This will not, however, be corrected by privatisation, but by democratising their organisation and by training their personnel to treat customers with consideration. Inner city borough councils are now seeking to improve the treatment of their tenants by decentralisation, so that tenants can have more direct contact and influence over officials immediately concerned with rents, repairs, complaints, etc. It is along these lines that reforms are needed for public enterprise.

Mervyn Jones quotes the Grunwick strike of 1977 in order to suggest that the Labour government did nothing for workers. 'Such workers don't have a right to refuse overtime, to get a guaranteed wage over the year, to ensure decent health conditions in the factory or for that matter to join a union'. He might have mentioned that nationalised industries have an exceptionally good record in these matters in contrast to private industry.

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DIARY

Christopher Price

Blackpool

The TUC had been written off as a hobbled carthorse before Conference even began by that élite band of exclusive punditry – who normally feed off the animal – the Industrial Correspondents' Group. So, having killed off one jamboree, they were looking for another one to report. Happily for them, it turned up in the shape of the Labour Leadership Circus. First, Peter Shore and Roy Hattersley and then Neil Kinnock defied the Len Murray injunction, and turned up to make solemn statements that they weren't canvassing. Just passing through – a difficult feat in Blackpool, since there's only one way in and out. They wandered importantly about, trailing a swarm of industrial correspondents straining for some reportable wit or wisdom. Though the Party may give Neil Kinnock an unopposed run as leader for a few years there's every chance that the deputy leadership election will now pollute the TUC annually. Their conference is timed to perfection – just a few weeks before Labour's – to provide an annual fashion parade for any MP who fancies himself (or herself) as a potential Deputy Dawg. Len Murray's worst fears were confirmed.

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Come to think of it, why do we need a deputy leader at all – especially one who makes everyone testify annually to a socialist purity in public, as though the Labour Party were some sort of Southern Baptist Chapel? It is rather absurd to create an ideological loyalty oath out of such a tinpot job. Admittedly it provides the holder with an *ex officio* seat on the NEC. But that, in origin, was just an *ad hoc* right-wing device to assuage Herbert Morrison's elderly ruffled feelings when the constituency parties predictably threw him off the Executive after Labour's defeat in 1951. Then the Left escalated the job still further at Wembley. One day the Party should call it quits and reduce the mountain to the molehill it once was.

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Len Murray's crunch argument for consensus rather than confrontation and a one-day strike was, 'Could you deliver your members?' He got some polite applause, but they all knew they couldn't. Or almost all. I was very pleased, during my last spell in Parliament, to represent one of the last real trade unions in Britain that can still deliver its members – the National Graphical Association. NGA printers are not exactly impoverished and they don't by any means all vote Labour – though the NGA is affiliated to the Party. But they do understand the virtues of solidarity in defence of their living standards. It is the only trade union in the history of the movement to have won a strike – game, set and match – not only against one of Britain's richest conglomerates, Pearson Longman, and its subsidiary, the *Financial Times*, but also against Len Murray and the whole General Council who were threatening them with expulsion from the TUC, just at the moment when the *FT* caved in. Indeed, they succeeded not only in beating the bosses, but in actually getting rid of their Top One. Though I am assured the two events were purely coincidental, in the aftermath of defeat the Hon. Alan Hare, Chairman and Chief Executive of the *Financial Times*, has 'resigned'. Len Murray, on the other hand, has stayed on, battered but unbowed, to win the conference over with a new TUC policy of using 'reasoned arguments' rather than strikes against Norman Tebbit. I wish him luck.

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If the Fleet Street end of the NGA has a fault, it is that it has not fully come to terms with equal opportunities and racial equality. There is a noticeable shortage of women and blacks on the stone and in the machine room. It's a characteristic which the Print has in common with a number of mildly *mafiosi* London trades – dockers, barristers' clerks and Covent Garden porters. There's a delightful vignette about typical recruiting methods in this year's General Council Report. It concerns an ex-Covent Garden porter who wanted the TGWU to give him his job back: 'The TGWU explained that this was a very difficult time for employment within The Market. The traditional method of obtaining a job was that an existing employee would have to put forward the name of a relative for consideration

and the branch kept a list of such persons which would be consulted whenever a vacancy occurred.' There's no doubt that these little bits of nepotism did wonders for solidarity in the old days. But the TUC should now find other ways of instilling a sense of brotherhood into the younger end of their membership, if they're to stop themselves becoming an irrelevant, neutered bureaucracy and their members becoming just helpless participants in the rat-race that the Prime Minister has planned for us all. They might start by taking as their slogan that excellent aphorism of Jimmy Reid (who has been much in evidence at Blackpool), 'The rat race, comrades, is for rats'.

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The conference found extreme difficulty in coming to terms with the plight of their younger, unemployed brethren. They decided to stick loyally with the Youth Training Scheme and they really had no option; though the Tory government is perverting it, it's a creation of the TUC which is the last sort of organisation to wish to commit infanticide. Plenty of delegates obviously enjoy sitting on Area Manpower Boards, supervising things. The trouble is that they're not very good at it. We were regaled with horrifying stories about safety hazards – 16 YOPs dead, 4,000 seriously injured since it all began; about 19th century employment contracts – with compulsory unpaid overtime, stoppages to pay for 'training' and 'fines' for misconduct; about weird, fly-by-night private charities springing up as 'agents' of the MSC. The real unease with the scheme, however, runs deep and right to the heart of their current dilemma. The TUC's *raison d'être* has always been to organise people in work; with the YTS, they're suddenly responsible for the unemployed as well. Though some unions are beginning to see it as a public relations vehicle for trade unionism and even as a chance of boosting their membership, to others it is simply not their job. It sucks them even deeper into collaboration with a government that wants to destroy them anyway. But for the moment, the collaborationists are winning.

ROGER WODDIS

Matches

(After the South Korean airliner disaster)

Two grown men
In a boxing stadium
Divert the fan
In the ringside seat.

Two small boys
Flickering lighted matches
Can cause alarm
In a crowded street.

Two grown men
Swapping bloody noses
May need the bread
And are free from guilt.

Two large bombs
In another context
May raze two towns
That can be rebuilt.

Two small boys
Flicking lighted matches
Put more at risk
Than their flaming youth.

Two small boys
In a pool of petrol
Ignite the world
In the name of truth.

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Reagan's defence revolution

Michael Klare examines the evidence that the present Administration has given in to an autonomous drive for global military paramountcy

Washington

'THIS IS NOT a one-year program for summer soldiers,' US secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger declared when introducing the Administration's $1.6 trillion defence build-up. 'It's a very long-range kind of thing.' Now, two and a half years later, we can begin to appreciate the accuracy of Mr Weinberger's prognostication: the current US Administration has carried out the most profound and thoroughgoing expansion of US military capabilities since the end of World War II.

Despite the worst recession in half a century, defence spending has increased by 57 per cent, from $133 billion in the fiscal year 1980 to $209 billion in 1983, and a whole array of new missiles, aircraft and warships has been approved for production. At the same time, the Administration has made major changes in the strategies and doctrines that guide US military operations. By far the most conspicuous aspects of the Reagan military programme have been the spending increase and an ambitious nuclear arms modernisation effort.

Arguing that prior budgetary levels were 'clearly inadequate' in the face of a continuing build-up of Soviet military strength, Mr Weinberger has proposed steady increases of 10-15 per cent per year in military spending *on top of* any increases required to offset inflation. This has produced spending increases of $23 billion in 1981, $27 billion in 1982, $26 billion in 1983 and a proposed $30 billion in 1984. These increases have been pursued, moreover, at a time when social spending has been cut back sharply and the federal deficit has soared to record levels.

Although Congress went along with the increases in 1981 and 1982, this year, with deficit soaring beyond the $200 billion level and social programmes cut to the bone, leaders of both parties have pleaded with Messrs Reagan and Weinberger to pare back Pentagon expenditures. Suggesting that the deficit figures are 'intolerable', Senator Paul Laxalt of Nevada, a conservative Republican and a close ally of the President, declared in February that 'those numbers have to come down dramatically', and, to do so, 'we're going to have to look at deferral of some military spending'. Such admonishments have had little effect on Administration leaders, however. After agreeing to a freeze on military pay increases, Mr Weinberger declared: 'We simply cannot reduce defense spending any further without undermining the security of the United States.'

At this point, it appears that Congress will reduce the 1984 Pentagon increase from the 10 per cent requested by Mr Reagan to perhaps 6 or 7 per cent, exclusive of inflation. Despite this setback, Weinberger has already announced his intention to press ahead with equally large increases in 1985 and the years thereafter: according to the 'Fiscal Years 1985-89 Defense Guidance', approved in March, Pentagon outlays are expected to reach $277.5 billion in 1985, $315 billion in 1986, $346 billion in 1987 and $377 billion in 1988. Defence *authorisations* – the amount that the Pentagon can commit to new purchases – will rise even higher, to a staggering $425 billion in 1988. Because these commitments normally result in the accumulation of vested interests around all of the individual arms programmes involved, the steady rise in authorisations will engender a legacy of high defence spending that will dominate American political debate well into the 1990s.

John Minnion

THE ADMINISTRATION's perseverence under pressure has been equally visible in the nuclear area. Soon after taking office in 1981, Mr Reagan approved a six-year $222 billion programme to restore American nuclear 'superiority'. The Reagan plan called for simultaneous modernisation of all three legs of the nuclear 'triad' – land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-based missiles (SLMBs) and manned bombers – along with the procurement of thousands of air-, sea- and ground-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs, SLCMs, GLCMs) and the modernisation of America's strategic command, control and communications (C^3) systems. Not since the Kennedy Administration has an American President attempted to acquire so many nuclear systems at once, and never before have such programmes generated so much political controversy on Capitol Hill.

Most controversial, of course, is the proposed M-X multiple-warhead ICBM. After voting down funds for M-X procurement in late 1982, Congress has now moved towards limited production of the giant missile in the hope that this will provoke a fresh commitment to progress at the START talks in Geneva.

Other weapons in the Administration's nuclear programme are likely to encounter continued opposition. Thus, the Rockwell International B-1B bomber, initially funded in the 1981 budget, is still in trouble because of its colossal cost. At $563 million per copy (in fiscal year 1984 dollars), it is by far the most costly aircraft ever built. Such extravagance is particularly hard to justify when even its most enthusiastic supporters acknowledge that the plane is not likely to survive Soviet air defences much beyond the early 1990s.

More than for any of these specific programmes, however, Reagan's nuclear plan has run into difficulty because of its underlying strategic objectives. Abandoning

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the 'pure deterrence' goal of earlier strategies, the Administration has explicitly called for the acquisition of a US capability to 'prevail' in a 'protracted' nuclear war. In the Pentagon's 'Defense Guidance' document for the fiscal years 1984-88, widely quoted in the American press, Mr Weinberger decreed that US strategic forces 'must *prevail* and be able to force the Soviet Union to seek earliest possible termination of hostilities on *terms favourable to the United States*' (emphasis added) should a nuclear war break out. Weinberger later denied that he was seeking a 'war winning' nuclear capability, but there is ample evidence to suggest that this is the long-range intent of US nuclear strategists.

The Administration's emphasis on nuclear war-fighting is particularly evident in plans to upgrade strategic C^3 systems and to establish 'defensive' systems in space. Contending that 'our strategic force management systems' must not only survive a nuclear attack but also 'remain capable of performing their basic functions' during a protracted nuclear conflict, Weinberger requested $6.9 billion in the fiscal period 1982-85 to 'harden' US C^3 capabilities against nuclear damage. Closely linked to this effort is the Administration's plan to place laser 'battle stations' in space and to develop a new generation of anti-missile weapons. These plans were first announced in President Reagan's so-called 'Star Wars' speech of 24 March, in which he proposed a massive technological effort to develop ground and space-based systems that would enable the United States to 'intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil'. Although consistently described as defensive systems, such weapons would actually be more useful in an offensive mode to destroy any incoming Soviet missiles that survived a US first strike. The Reagan plan has also been criticised for its potentially astronomical costs – no one really knows how many hundreds of billions of dollars would be needed to place a missile defense system in space –and its questionable technological feasibility.

CLEARLY, THESE two facets of Reagan's military programme – the steady increase in spending and the development of new nuclear capabilities – will continue to dominate the domestic political debate on US national security policies. But there are two other important aspects of this programme that have not, until now, attracted this sort of attention. Nevertheless, these two factors – the emphasis on development of new conventional warfare capabilities and the modernisation of US combat doctrine – will probably have an equal or greater impact on US policy in the years ahead.

Although US nuclear programmes have, quite understandably, drawn the most intensive scrutiny by Congress and the press, the fact is that non-nuclear, conventional arms programmes account for the largest share of the Reagan budget increases. In 1984, for instance, strategic nuclear programmes will consume about $28 billion, approximately 10 per cent of the Pentagon's total budget authority; most of the remaining $274 billion will be committed to America's 'General Purpose' forces – the army and marine corps, the navy's surface fleets and the air force's Tactical Air Command. These are the forces that will bear the heaviest brunt of the fighting if America goes to war in the near future, and these are the forces that are receiving most of the new funding for weapons research, arms procurement and force modernisation.

The principal beneficiaries of this effort have been the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) and the Navy. Originally organised by the Carter Administration in 1980, the RDF has grown from a lean, mobile infantry force of perhaps 200,000 soldiers into an armour-heavy army of 400,000. In the process, new 'basing facilities' have been acquired in Somalia, Kenya, Egypt and Oman, and a new US command authority, CENTCOM (for Central Command), has been established for the Middle East. At the same time, and with other theatres of operations in mind (notably Central America), the Administration has ordered the first expansion of US Special Forces (the 'Green Berets') since the end of the Vietnam War.

Parallelling this effort has been a massive expansion of the navy's surface fleet, which will acquire three new carrier battle groups over the next ten years. Under the leadership of Navy Secretary John Lehman, one of the most articulate and determined advocates of the Reagan programme, the Navy has also adopted new combat tactics stressing offensive sallies into Soviet 'home waters' such as the Barents Sea and the Sea of Japan. In response to charges that such action would court disaster, Lehman has insisted that sophisticated new defence systems will ensure the survival of US warships.

Indeed, the entire US military establishment is now embarking upon a revolution in conventional arms technology every bit as profound as the new developments in nuclear and space systems. At the forefront of this revolution is a new generation of super-sophisticated arms known as 'ET' weapons for 'emerging technologies'. The future ET arsenal will include a whole array of precision-guided munitions (PGMs) equipped with electronic sensors and microcomputers permitting them to track enemy planes, ships, and vehicles, to evade or foil enemy defences and to impact on the target's most vulnerable points. These new technologies, Weinberger told a NATO convocation in Brussels last autumn, will result in conventional weapons of 'unprecedented quality that will enable us virtually to strike the targets at which we aim, in all weather conditions, day or night'.

A major goal of the Pentagon's ET programme is to develop weapons that can be used to attack enemy forces and installations deep inside Warsaw Pact territory. In the event of a Soviet attack on Western Europe, these 'strike deep' weapons could theoretically be used to neutralise the Soviets' second and third echelon forces while NATO's front-line units would engage the first wave of attacking forces. In a presentation on this strategy before the same 1982 meeting, NATO Supreme Commander General Bernard W. Rogers explained that 'we must exploit Western technological superiority to provide us with the means to target and destroy with conventional weapons the Warsaw Pact follow-on forces before they can reach the front-line of contact'.

Advocates of the new ET systems contend that they will enable NATO forces to resist a conventional Warsaw Pact attack without resorting (at least initially) to the use of tactical nuclear munitions. Clearly, such a capacity has considerable political attraction at a time of growing citizen protest against nuclear weapons. Given that 'there is a growing consensus that less reliance should be placed on the use of nuclear in response to a conventional Warsaw Pact attack', Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia told the Senate Armed Services Committee recently, 'the importance of a credible conventional deterrent grows'.

To accomplish this task, however, the new 'strike deep' weapons will have to approach the destructive capacity of tactical nuclear weapons. Thus the proposed 'Assault Breaker' missile will have an assured 'damage radius' of some 400 metres – almost as much as a 1-kiloton enhanced radiation ('neutron') warhead. Conventional arms of this sort have been dubbed 'quasi-nuclear' or 'near-nuclear' weapons by critics, who charge that they will erode the 'firebreak' between conventional and nuclear munitions. 'If the destructiveness of the one (class of weapons) overlaps with that of the other, the threshold becomes merely symbolic,' Julian Perry Robinson of Sussex University's Science Policy Research Unit noted at a recent Pugwash Conference.

DESPITE SUCH considerations, the Administration appears certain to move ahead rapidly with the ET programmes. Mr Weinberger placed special emphasis on these weapons in his 1984 budget request, and the armed services – along with all the producers of such equipment – have been lobbying hard for approval of the new systems. Their task has been made easier, moreover, by the enthusiasm shown for high-tech conventional weapons by many Democrats, including Presidential hopefuls Walter Mondale and Gary Hart. These 'Atari Democrats', as they are sometimes called, have coupled their calls for nuclear restraint with pledges of support for ET conventional programmes.

The revolution in conventional arms is being accompanied by an equally far-reaching transformation of US military doctrine. In recognition of the changing technology and the growing military might of the USSR, US strategists have developed a new body of doctrine stressing rapid movement and fluid battlefield tactics.

Surprisingly, the doctrinal revolution is being spearheaded by the US army – traditionally the most conservative of the four armed services. Last summer, the army introduced its first completely new combat doctrine in decades. Known as the AirLand Battle Concept, or ABC, the new doctrine calls for US troops to confront incoming enemy forces, with massed firepower where necessary, while simultaneously mounting

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offensive strikes against the enemy's rear-area capabilities. Such a strategy will require close coordination between air and ground units, plus superior intelligence, communications and electronic warfare capabilities. 'No longer will the outcome of battle be decided by attrition between lines drawn up as in a football game,' an ABC discussion paper notes. 'Picture a soccer game as opposed to football – each element manoeuvring in what appears to be an independent, uncoordinated way. In reality, it is a highly-coordinated plan of action.'

While many US leaders have applauded the new emphasis on doctrinal innovation, certain aspects of the AirLand Strategy have produced alarm. Of particular concern to some US legislators is the emphasis on offensive strikes by 'dual capable' forces – i.e., forces equipped with both nuclear and conventional weapons. The ABC strategy paper is notably uninhibited in its advocacy of such attacks. 'Systems designed to defeat enemy assault elements (and) to disrupt follow-on forces,' the document asserts, 'must be able to deliver conventional and/or nuclear fire throughout the spectrum of the battle (and) throughout the depth of the battlefield.' As noted by critics, this could lead to tactical nuclear strikes against Soviet installations in Eastern Europe, thereby threatening the survival of the USSR's early-warning and strategic C^3 systems. Because such action could prompt a full-scale Soviet nuclear response, Harvard's Barry R. Posen suggests, in a recent issue of *International Security*, the implementation of the ABC doctrine could unleash 'enormous and possibly uncontrollable escalatory pressures'.

When stacked together, these four features of the Reagan programme comprise an unprecedented transformation of US military capabilities and policies. Individually, each of these components raises significant questions about the tenor of US defence policy; collectively, they present a very disturbing picture of intentions.

While all of these programmes are described as a response to an alleged Soviet quest for superiority, they seem instead to reflect an autonomous US drive to preserve and enhance America's global military paramountcy. Particularly revealing in this regard is the Administration's emphasis on Carrier Battle Groups and the Rapid Deployment Force – interventionary resources that far exceed planned or existing Soviet capabilities. This emphasis on offensive power is reflected, moreover, in Reagan's nuclear plans and the army's AirLand strategy. Nowhere is there any evidence that the Administration is seeking a *modus operandi* with Moscow that would permit significant force reductions in any theatre or at any level of the combat spectrum. The total picture is one of intensified global engagement, and it is one that is likely to leave its stamp on US defence policy for a long time to come. □

Michael T. Klare is a Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC and author of Beyond the 'Vietnam Syndrome' – US Intervention in the 1980s.

NAMIBIA

Big power politics

Denis Herbstein reflects on how a war is reported

THE CLIPPED VOICE on *Any Questions* disturbed the lethargic summer afternoon. 'I've just come back from South Africa and I've been up on the Angolan border where the South African armed forces and the Namibian armed forces are trying to drive back the infiltration of a murderous mob called SWAPO, trained by Cubans in Angola, armed by the Soviet Union, whose sole purpose in life is to cross that border and kill as many whites as they can . . .' Air Vice Marshall (ret) Stewart Menaul of the Institute for the Study in Conflict had delivered the goods on the BBC.

I waited for the 'balance', in the shape of Melvyn Bragg, but the left-leaning author had not enjoyed a Pretoria-sanctioned freebie to the front-line and could not correct the errors and misconceptions.

For most British foreign editors, Namibia is a faraway country with little apparent reader interest. The story is complex, crammed with a cast of thousands. You start your piece with an explanatory, 'Namibia, formerly South West Africa, the one-time League of Nations mandated territory whose mandate was revoked by the United Nations in 1966 but is still occupied by a 100,000-strong South African force, pitted against the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) liberation movement . . .' By which time the writing journalist is halfway through the allotted 500 words.

Over the years, British television and the liberal newspapers, helped by hardy churchmen and disenchanted national servicemen, have exposed torture by South African soldiers in Ovamboland, or the massacre of Namibian women and children in refugee camps in Angola. But that is not the same as seeing and hearing the victim yourself, as reporters regularly do in Central America.

On the army's tightly-chaperoned foreign press visits to the Ovamboland war zone in northern Namibia, journalists spend the night in the fortified white village of Oshakati, then fly north into South African-occupied Angola, returning to meet a selection of Pretoria's chosen black 'leaders'. No SWAPO supporter – which is most of the population – would dare come forward to be interviewed. (Covering the war from the Angolan side – if you can land a visa – is a perilous undertaking. Last year, a convoy of pressmen, including the BBC, the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times*, were shot up in southern Angola by South African planes.)

So the people who do get to the South African side of the war are the Menauls of this world – sympathetic journalists, Tory jingoes, cold war strategists – as guests of Pretoria or PROSWA, the Windhoek business community's publicity organ. They may be briefed in London by Sir Trevor Lloyd-Hughes, Harold Wilson's one-time private secretary, who now runs the 'Namibia Information Service' (Sir Trevor must be one of the best-paid letter-writers to *The Times*). These visitors ritually disassociate themselves from any sympathy for apartheid, all the while warning of the threat of communism to the West's strategic interest.

The people of Namibia are forgotten. Their story is traumatic. The early German soldiers perfected the art of genocide on the Hereros and Namas, all but eradicating them. After the first world war, Britain was prevented by President Woodrow Wilson from allowing South Africa to annex 'South-West' as a spoil of war. It became a League of Nations mandate instead, with South Africa obliged to 'promote to the utmost the material and moral welfare and the social progress' of its people. In one famous incident, General Jan Smuts, a father of the League, bombed the small Bondelswartz tribe into a more respectful attitude.

BY 1966, ALL the other six former German colonies in Africa had shed their mandate status to become independent. That year, the general assembly revoked South Africa's mandate – the British Labour government mysteriously abstained, though the US was in favour. South Africa was told to pull out its troops and administration forthwith, but on the contrary has been pulling in ever since, even using Namibia as a springboard to invade Angola in an attempt to stop the MPLA taking power. The invasion failed and the cause of SWAPO received a tremendous fillip. It is not likely to defeat the enemy on the battlefield, but the war is costing South Africa heavily in men and material.

SWAPO's leaders are invariably mission-educated, though it stands to reason that the longer the external wing remains dependent on the Soviet bloc for arms and training, the more radical its leadership will become. Its internal following is enormous, and no longer limited to the Ovambos, who make up about half of the population of over one million. These days SWAPO *is* Namibia.

For some years now it has been accepted by government and opposition in South Africa that SWAPO would win any free election with something to spare. Only the size of that majority would be in doubt. Any leader tainted by contact with Pretoria doesn't stand a chance. There is not even a Bishop Muzorewa figure for Pretoria and the West to pin their hopes on.

A SWAPO government will choose English as its official language, and join the Commonwealth. Whites – their growing identification with SWAPO is still confined to the closet – will be encouraged to stay. An economic policy has not yet been worked out, but will certainly encompass the restoration of some of the farm land seized by the white settlers. No doubt, as well, the state will acquire a majority holding in the mining industry, the backbone of the economy. All of which is par for the African nationalist

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course these days.

SWAPO's campaign rests on three pivots of guerrilla warfare, internal organisation and diplomacy. In 1977, fearful of a UN economic sanctions vote against South Africa, five major western powers (USA, France, West Germany, Canada, Britain) undertook to obtain a settlement in terms of a Security Council endorsed resolution. But the newly-elected Reagan introduced a fresh issue – that South African troops should not leave without a corresponding withdrawal by Cuban troops from Angola.

These were the Cubans who had come in 1975 to resist the South African invasion, itself inspired and aided by Kissinger and the CIA. Now they are needed to fight the Angolan counter-revolutionaries – UNITA – led by South Africa's ally, Jonas Savimbi. So the US had injected a purely domestic dimension into the story. If Reagan does get his way, he will remind voters next year that somewhere on this planet he bested Fidel Castro.

A pusillanimous Britain has gone along with this 'linkage' demand. It would make things easier, successive Foreign Office ministers have suggested, to secure a settlement. They might add that it would also repay Washington for helping out in the Falklands war. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office plays a crucial role in the presentation of Namibian background news to the British media. Publicly and in non-attributable briefings, it has been optimistic in the face of the facts. Its officers in South Africa presumably have their ears close to the ground and must know that Pretoria is not ready to give up Namibia.

Britain's major stake in Namibia is the RTZ uranium mine at Rossing. It was a Labour minister, Tony Benn, who signed an agreement to buy uranium oxide from the mine, in defiance of a UN resolution prohibiting trade with Namibia. And for five years before becoming Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington was a director of RTZ, presumably concurring in his company's defiance of the UN. □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

□ And a consortium led by Conoco Petroleum has been granted a licence to drill in another part of the forest. Christopher Milne, the Christopher Robin of the books, who now lives in Devon, reacted angrily last week when told of the licences. 'You just jolly well don't do that sort of thing here. It is a very special place. Pooh could never have stomped a wood littered with oilwells.' – *Sunday Times* (G. Moor)

□ Deputy housing chairman Coun Tony Damms said last night that the problem was extremely serious, but stressed there was no danger to the occupants of the flats. 'It is just that people standing underneath them are likely to get a piece of concrete landing on their head,' he said. – *Sheffield Morning Telegraph* (John Taylor)

□ He had a tough adolescence, having been brought up in the South of England, and although that was in no way an excuse for what he had done, if he could succeed against those problems he should be all right. – *Hebden Bridge Times* (Felicity Potter)

□ 'The WI is getting too political', says Mrs Totty. 'Why there was talk of their discussing unemployment at meetings, but that is an urban problem and has nothing to do with us.' – *Observer Colour Supplement* (L. V. Pike)

WEST GERMANY

Victim of oppression

Tony Paterson reports on a West Berlin suicide

Bonn

WEST GERMANY woke up to the truth about its treatment of political refugees last week when a pale and frightened young man jumped to his death from the sixth floor of a West Berlin court building where judges were deciding whether to hand him over to the Turkish military junta.

The man was 23-year-old Kemal Altun, a member of a proscribed left-wing student organisation allied to Bulent Ecevit's banned Republican People's Party, who had been seeking political asylum in West Germany since 1981.

There seems little doubt as to why Altun took his own life – fear of being deported to a country where 21,000 political prisoners are currently in jail, where confessions are exacted by torture and where the rights of defendants amount to little more than a farce is reason enough.

After spending 13 months in prison while the Bonn Interior Ministry fought to secure his extradition, Altun – who spoke no German – was apparently at his wit's end. His period of detention broke him, Altun's lawyer Wolfgang Wieland said. He was terrified of being deported every time his cell door opened.

Altun was initially granted political asylum by the Bavarian Office for Recognition of Foreign Refugees, but his problems began when the Bonn Government challenged the ruling and forced the issue into the courts.

The West German authorities inquired via Interpol in Turkey whether Altun was wanted by Ankara. With this question, commented Wieland, Altun was being handed over to the Turkish authorities on a silver platter.

Ankara promptly replied to the Bonn Foreign Office, demanding his extradition on the grounds that he was wanted for the attempted murder in 1980 of Guen Sazak, a former Turkish government minister and member of the extreme-right-wing MHP party.

Had the Turkish extradition request remained based on these grounds, Altun would have remained in West Germany. For under federal law no political refugee can be extradited to a country where he is likely to face the death sentence. But several weeks later the Turkish authorities removed this stumbling block by dropping charges of attempted murder against Altun and accused him instead merely of complicity in the affair.

Altun consistently proclaimed his innocence, but the case was duly referred to the West Berlin Supreme Court, which immediately upheld the Turkish charges and agreed to extradition pending the results of its ruling. Altun was given no opportunity to state his side of his case before the court gave this ruling.

As current West German law permits the extradition of individuals even during proceedings to determine whether they are eligible for political asylum, only the intervention of Amnesty International, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Commission of Human Rights on Altun's behalf prevented the Bonn government from flying him back to Turkey immediately.

JUST HOW KEEN the Bonn Government was to comply with the Turkish demands became evident two days after Altun's death. A letter written to the Justice Ministry by right-wing Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann on his return from an official visit to Turkey on 21 July was leaked to the press. It demanded Altun's 'immediate' extradition 'in the interests of worthwhile cooperation with Turkey'.

On the same day a letter was dispatched from the Bonn Justice Ministry to the Foreign Ministry demanding 'formal agreement to the completion of extradition' proceedings. The author, Justice Ministry State Secretary Klaus Kinkel stated simply that objections to Altun's extradition came 'chiefly from extreme left-wing circles' and dismissed the suggestion that he might face torture as 'without foundation'.

Throughout the court proceedings, Altun's lawyer was waiting for the government to agree to delay extradition until his case had been heard by the European Commission on Human Rights. On the day of Altun's death, the government had still not sent a reply.

Because of its 1.7 million Turkish 'guest-workers', West Germany is currently keen to keep its relations sweet with General Evren's junta. Rumour has it that Zimmermann, Bonn's most recent envoy to Turkey, has returned with 175 new extradition demands.

The sort of experience Altun might have faced had he lived to face extradition was demonstrated by Levent Begen, a Turk who was deported to Turkey from West Germany in 1980 after the Bonn Government obtained assurances from Ankara that he would not be charged on political grounds.

Amnesty International established soon after Begen's return, that he was tortured by Turkish police and sentenced to 36 years hard labour for political crimes. When the Bonn Government protested, Turkey obliged by retrying Begen who was promptly given the same sentence for 'non-political' offences. □

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LETTERS

Socialism v. trade unionism

Philip Jones, Morden, Surrey

In his stimulating analysis of the lack of actual socialism in Labour's recent policies (*NS* 2 Sept.) Mervyn Jones suggests that the last Labour government's failure to protect exploited workers in small firms was due to wrong priorities. The real explanation is even worse: Labour's inaction was a matter of principle. Giving workers statutory rights implies that those rights must be enforceable through and subject to the courts and this, of course, is anathema to the trade union establishment. There are understandable reasons for this (reforming the judiciary should be on any socialist programme!), but it was surely absurd for a party theoretically committed to workers' rights to create a situation where workers with no industrial muscle had to keep on forelock-touching while (in one extreme case) a powerful union could establish a closed shop in a firm none of whose employees wanted to join it.

This is by no means the only area of conflict between Labour's socialist and trade union traditions. In many industries no effective system of industrial democracy could be built on the often divisive and fossilised trade union structure (and, certainly, one that was would have less than zero electoral appeal); yet there has been a great reluctance by Labour's policy-makers to consider what instead would be 'the best obtainable system of *popular* administration and control of each industry or service'. Perhaps, however, the move towards more centralised unionism implicit in the Tories' reform proposals, plus their threat of an enforced separation of the unions from the Labour Party, may provide the impetus for some new thinking on this subject.

Careless colonialism

Frank McGuinness, County Dublin, Eire

Michael Schmidt in his judging of the Prudence Farmer Award (*NS* 26 August) belittles Harry Clifton's poem 'Monsoon Girl' for epitomising the 'characteristic British tone abroad'. In doing so his criticism betrays more than a little of the careless colonialism he finds implicit in Clifton's poem. Had he taken the poem seriously enough to establish, as he did with the American Carolyn Forché, Clifton's nationality – Irish – he might have realised that the poem emerged from somewhat different historical, hence imaginative and moral, resources than those with which he associates the poem.

Flattery will get you nowhere

Michael Walker, 50 Warwick Square, London SW1

Truly I am flattered by the press interest in 50 Warwick Square. The *Daily Mirror* and the *New Statesman* (2 Sept.) have painted a most colourful picture of the goings-on here. The truth is a little more humdrum.

'Heritage Tours' operates from Suffolk, not from London. 'Heritage Tours' offices do not exist; although in a rhetorical mood Gareth Light or myself might have misled you about this. I say *you* because from the moment Griffin and I started advertising our services as couriers we received the unwelcome attentions of political journalists, anxious to learn about our backgrounds. I grilled Roberto Fiore for three hours one night on the difference between Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, but when the great day of his first (and last) job for 'Heritage Tours' arrived, his client proved to be uninterested in church architecture and much more interested in Fiore's political opinions. Our 'organisation' may not have been infiltrated but I rather wonder if *all* our customers to date (all *three* of them) haven't been infiltrators.

The criticism of Mr Ridley is rather unfair (one imagines a lift crammed full of skinheads and an 'oblivious' gentleman trying to read his *Times* in the corner!). So far as the alleged assault on a photographer was concerned, charges have not been brought against anyone in connection with this supposed 'incident'. Mr Ridley has been 'oblivious' to what goes on in the flat above him for the good reason that he is seldom here and doesn't snoop when he is (unlike the journalists of certain left-wing papers).

First moral: If you want to show tourists around London make sure you and your couriers are all left of centre.

Second moral: Don't live with Tories.

If you want a guided tour of London, you only have to telephone.

Faux pas

Godfrey Hodgson, Oxford

It was only when I got back from holiday and read my *NS* (2 Sept.) that I saw that for some reason I committed an inexplicable howler in my review of Fred Halliday's *The Making of the Second Cold War*. The fellow who blundered on to the field of Waterloo, of course, was not Julien Sorel in *The Red and the Black* but Fabrizio del Dongo in *The Charterhouse of Parma*.

Goodies, Baddies and the Bomb

Alasdair Beal, Leeds

So Steve Potter (*NS* 26 August) denies any manipulation by the Socialist League at CND's Labour Movement conference in Manchester in 1981. Considering the Socialist League didn't even exist then, it's fair enough – unless he's suggesting that it's one and the same thing as the old IMG, which would be a bit of a give-away, wouldn't it?

The IMG's crime at the conference was to go along with an SWP-organised disruption which led to the removal of Olive Gibbs from the conference chair and the replacement of much of the advertised discussion with a debate on a series of resolutions which could only be described as fairly banal (if you discount the Spartacists' loony contribution). Of course, there's nothing in the rules of democracy which prohibits wasting people's time in this way but it does tend to put a lot of folk off.

Ah, but this was a long time ago and we should not talk about organisational improprieties – it's the politics that counts. 'There is a major debate about orientation going on in CND', claims comrade Potter. Strange that 'orientation' isn't mentioned anywhere in the interim agenda for CND's conference this year. Maybe he means that he would *like* there to be a major debate on 'orientation' ('orientation' being either towards or away from the labour movement).

In such a debate, the Goodies would be up against a leadership (the Baddies who, as usual, Want to Sell Out the Workers) which persistently tries to deny the importance of the labour and trade union movement. The trouble is that the anti-labour tendency predicted by theory is nowhere to be seen. The hoped-for 'major debate' thus looks a bit more like tilting at windmills. If we can't find real opponents to practice our debating skills on, we can always play 'Spot the Sell-Out on CND's Basic Principles' – a game with many opportunities for impassioned 'holier than thou' speeches which might get us a place in the history books, even if it doesn't actually take us anywhere on practical problems.

Meanwhile, so the story goes, cruise missiles may be with us by Christmas – but we'll talk about that some other day, won't we?

Send in the clowns

Donald Reeves, Rector, St James's Piccadilly, London W1

I was intrigued to see that with the help of the *Daily Mail's* inadequate and inaccurate report something I said was considered quaint enough to be quoted in This England (*NS* 26 August). It was about the Clown Workshop at St James's, Piccadilly, where I said, 'Every church should have a troupe of clowns'. It was a privilege to welcome the clowns. They stem from a tradition which unmasks pomposity and arrogance where the rich are sent away and the poor raised up. They know as much about tears as laughter. They are weak, vulnerable and helpless, but invincible in their spirit.

Perhaps all that was too much for the *Daily Mail* but I am sure your readers will get the point.

Knickers in a twist

Oliver Owen, Hove, Sussex

I think you will find that the picture of Mrs Thatcher on p.9 of your 2nd September issue was taken at the Earls Court Boat Show. I was there and witnessed her ride.

I am not sure how many years ago it was; probably five at least.

In the interests of accuracy, you understand.

A touch of the schadenfreudes

Jean Northam, Huxham, Exeter

I hope you will take no notice of Michael Carlson's sour letter (*NS* 19 August). I take it that the 'point' of First Person is that it provides a touch of the amusing, the personal and the offbeat.

Some people (me, for instance) enjoy reading about other people's incompetence. Anna Coote's piece (*NS* 19 August) about her exceptional friends and their outstanding babies should have been right up Michael Carlson's street.

Information wanted

Huw Richards, 12 Bloemfontein Road, London W12

I am doing a PhD on the history of the *Daily Herald* at the Open University. I would be interested to hear from any readers who have memories, documents, correspondance or records relating to the *Herald*, its staff and its relations with the rest of the Labour movement, particularly in the interwar years.

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BRETECHER

UNCLE

Small Wonder
What do you think of these for your little brother Helen?
ridiculous, much too young
oh mother... let gran dress my uncle the way she wants
BRETECHER

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Derek Mahon

An empire of signs

DEREK MAHON spent four days at the Edinburgh Festival; his report appears below

EDINBURGH, wrote Hugh MacDiarmid, 'lives on manifestations of the creative spirit made elsewhere, and it is not regarded as a serious matter (it is not even realised) that it does not in turn initiate anything – hardly anything at all, let alone anything of prime consequence – in relation to any of the subjects upon which it nevertheless battens so disproportionately.'

Harsh words about the handsome sandstone city which gave the world Robert Louis Stevenson and, er, Jean Brodie; but even allowing for his customary exaggeration, MacDiarmid's 50-year-old put-down still largely applies. Except in the fields of theology and medicine, Edinburgh has been content to *be* rather than to *do*. It's a cultural clearing-house and an agreeable one; but those in search of artistic innovation (something demanding a degree of offensiveness or at least singularity) might be better advised to look to Glasgow or Orkney.

This year, as though to prove MacDiarmid's point, the theme of the 37th Edinburgh Festival was 'Vienna 1900' – a notion which, with its suggestions of decadence, intellectual ferment and psychic disintegration, seems about as foreign to the Edinburgh civic ethos as it is possible to be. Austria-Hungary was the prime example of a culture achieving its climax at the moment of destruction; it was an empire of signs, once taken for wonders, now unremarkable features of the artistic life of the West: irony, parody, formal discord, the adoption of Anger as (in Trilling's phrase) the 'institutionalised emotion' of the new century as Love was of the old.

The Vienna idea appears to have derived from the rather tenuous artistic link between Scotland and Austria at the turn of the century – a link personified in Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the 'Glasgow School' of applied artists whose work, together with that of the Austrian 'Secessionists', formed the basis of a rather cluttered exhibition at the Museum of National Antiquities in Queen St, opened by Schönberg's daughter and presided over by a marble bust of the patriarchal Franz Josef himself. Here, surrounded by enlarged photographs of crowds acclaiming the Emperor or calling for his blood (it was not clear which), hung Klimt's undemanding *Birchwood;* but here too were a couple of harsh nudes by Schiele. Here were costumes from the original *Rosenkavalier;* but here too were theatre and political-cabaret posters by Kokoschka.

Austrian Museum of Applied Arts

Kokoschka theatre poster, 1909

A pattern emerged (one reflected also in music and literature) whereby three waves of activity took the Hapsburg capital from Blue Danube *gemütlichkeit* to its position, obvious only in retrospect, as one of the originating centres of modern European thought. First you had Richard Strauss, Klimt and Schnitzler, all digestible by the bourgeois – although Schnitzler in particular, whose *Games With Love And Death* will be re-issued shortly by Penguin, caused some flutterings in the moral dovecotes. Next came Schönberg, Schiele and Kraus, whose work represented a smack in the public kisser; and finally – maturing later in a sort of diaspora – Webern, Kokoschka and the incomparable Robert Musil, who address us like contemporaries.

The ingenious furniture and conversation-provoking cutlery once hailed as a revo-

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lution in design, scattered for decades among a dozen museums and here briefly reunited, must have found plenty to talk about – perhaps recalling with wistful deprecation the historical moment when they seemed to have a future, and when that future lay in the hands of the *nouveaux riches* for whose use they were intended. (It needs to be said that Viennese culture was an almost exclusively bourgeois phenomenon, although the mayor of the day, Karl Lüger, was a Socialist. Freud and Schnitzler, a specialist in hypnosis, ministered to middle-class maladies, real or imaginary.)

Anthony Burgess, talking about music and literature in Charlotte Square Gardens, spoke of the 'neurotic' character of the atonal music pioneered by Schönberg, and I suddenly remembered Robert Brough's languid *Fantasies of Madness* in Queen St and thought: what *about* Freud? Aside from an honorific appearance in the Complete Programme Guide, the old tyrant played little or no part in the Festival. This is curious, since he was, after all, in combining the functions of the physician and the divine, a sort of composite Edinburgh figure as well as the most important Viennese of his time.

Once 'neurosis' had been mentioned its presence became obvious everywhere, like 'the thunder in the air' Musil remembered after the downpour of the First World War. It underlay the musical crisis, the swift transition of pictorial art from the lyrical and decorative to the murderously grotesque, and the hectic work of the extraordinary Karl Kraus, whose unstageable play *The Last Days of Mankind* was staged by the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre at the Assembly Hall. The drama critics have told us of the 800-page text here scissored to a mere four hours; of the hilarious stage directions and ideal cast of thousands; and they have tended to agree that the production was not a success. It wasn't. Restaurateur, patriot, jingo journalist etc. yelled their platitudes and justified fears in a high-pitched monotonous rant that soon grew wearisome, obscuring Kraus's brilliant one-liners. Anyone who has seen *Oh, What a Lovely War!* is spoilt for this kind of thing, revolutionary and clairvoyant though it was and is.

Anxiously in pursuit of further neurosis, I tried the Scottish Opera's *Death in Venice* at the King's Theatre: music by Britten, libretto by Myfanwy Piper. I am neither an opera buff nor, *a fortiori*, a Britten fan, but I could tell that this was a dud of another kind. The Kraus was a mighty work badly produced; *Death* was plain lousy. I say this not because I couldn't make out the words, or because the fits and starts of the hydraulic gondolas claimed my fascinated attention at crucial moments, or because Aschenbach's diary entries, projected on to a screen above the proscenium arch, got so mixed up that they took on a life of their own, thrillingly at variance with events on stage – no, these were unexpected pluses. It was a dud because it was tired and derivative – from, specifically, Visconti's film, which it mimicked slavishly.

I took my children to see a Ukrainian folk-tale done with ultra-violet puppets in St George's Church Hall; otherwise, I say it with shame, I saw nothing of the Fringe. Time was short, and where would you begin? Besides, it's now virtually a Festival in its own right, together with the Film, Jazz and TV Festivals. Word had it, however, that the Cambridge Mummers' *Circe* was not to be missed. (I missed it: a stage version of the Nighttown chapter from what Burgess, in Roman conversation with the present writer, once called 'the great Austro-Hungarian novel' – *Ulysses*. Obviously he hadn't yet read Musil.) Ian Stuart's *Krapp* was highly praised, and a Southampton student group had enterprisingly exhumed *The Burning Bush*, a Kokoschka play inspired by his affair with Alma Mahler. (Kokoschka, like Schönberg and others, worked in more than one medium.)

Given the time, I'd like to have seen Jim Sheridan's *Spike in the First World War* (7:84 Company) and Rob Inglis's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* – wherein, according to the Fringe Guide, Stevenson's protagonist, 'repressed by Edinburgh calvinist upbringing, exploits city's medical discoveries: see him become Hyde, monster of London's music halls!' There you are, theology and medicine again, with music thrown in for good measure: how Viennese can you get? But these, as I say, are the things I *didn't* see.

I did, however, sniff around the Book Fair, which is where I caught up with Burgess; also with Updike, this year's Great American Novelist, of whom a few minutes sufficed. I was too late for readings by James Fenton and Craig Raine, too late even for the still active literary editor of *The Spectator* (who I am told can look down his nose at people twice his size), and too early for Anita Desai and William Boyd. The pursuit of high culture precluded an evening with Brian Patten, Adrian Henri and Roger McGough, which would have been more fun; but I glimpsed a familiar Covent Garden juggler hard at it in Princes St.

The consensus seemed to be that this was not one of the great Edinburgh Festivals. Most of it was literally *déjà vu;* and there was a curious sense of triviality throughout, despite the grandeur of the conception. On 1 October the Directorship changes hands; John Drummond is succeeded by Frank Dunlop, who has already spoken of fashion shows and gourmet pavilions. Personally I would like to see a higher proportion of indigenous stuff, and a return to the principle of special commissions. (It was here, in the mists of time, that Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* had its première). Still, I'd go again: nae proablem. My thanks to Pam, Sandy, Alastair, Isabel and Christopher; to Anne Smith; and to Paul Binding for lending me his copy of *The Man Without Qualities* – where Musil, after castigating Vienna in terms similar to those of MacDiarmid on Edinburgh, reflects: '*Es ist passiert*, "it just sort of happened", people said . . . It was a peculiar phrase, the very breath of it transforming facts into something as light as eiderdown, as thought itself . . . Yes, in spite of much that seems to point the other way, [Imperial Austria] was perhaps a home for genius after all; and that, probably, was the ruin of it.' □

WORLD ECONOMY
Frank Kane

In the web

Of Bread and Guns: The World Economy in Crisis
NIGEL HARRIS *Penguin* £2.95
Hard Times: The World Economy in Turmoil
BOB SUTCLIFFE *Pluto* £2.50

Regular listeners to *Prime Minister's Question Time* will be familiar with responses about the British economy. They are usually delivered in the patient manner of a schoolmarm to a particularly dense class. Britain is at the mercy of world-wide market forces, like everybody else; Britain's economic difficulties mirror those of the other advanced countries; no long-term recovery can take place until the world recession is over. Surprisingly, both these books are in general agreement with this diagnosis. Not so surprisingly, given their socialist outlook, they disagree fundamentally as to causes and cures.

For Thatcher, the 'unseen hand' works in a fairly straightforward way. It's really no different from a seasonal downturn in the sales figures of the family grocery business, and the solution is equally simple – pull in the belt a notch or two, lay off the delivery boy, count the pennies, and things will eventually look up. For Harris and Sutcliffe, the recession is proof that Marxist economic analysis is on the right track. Slump and stagnation are inevitably cyclical and progressively more severe. They arise from the essential fallibility of the profit motive as the dynamo of capitalist economic progress. But it would be wrong to get the impression that these books offer no more than a restatement of classical Marxism. Both see huge differences between the crisis of modern capitalism and anything before.

After the war, the argument goes, the USA created an artificial economic boom. It used its own massive industrial capacity to supply the materials for recovery to a devastated world, and its own dollars to pay for these materials. Hence the Marshall Plan, and hence also, to maintain the momentum, the Cold War, Korea and the permanent arms economy. These were all courtesy of that most American of Keynesian fine-tuning techniques, the military-industrial complex. The war in Vietnam was the last attempt of US capitalism to recreate the boom conditions of the Fifties through the agency of military spending – the last to date, that is.

In 1973 the world economy collapsed into a trough from which it has yet to emerge. Neither author pays much heed to the orthodox explanation for the slump, the increase in world oil prices of that year. Sutcliffe points out that the most significant indicator

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of capitalist health, the return on investment, had been falling steadily for some years before; Harris argues that oil prices increased by little more than other commodity prices, and that OECD countries experienced minimal real increases in their oil bills. OPEC 'blackmail' was a convenient smokescreen for the real causes of the slump (the decline in profit and the inflationary profligacy of the arms trade) and the real losers were the Third World countries which had to mortgage themselves to the hilt to pay for oil imports.

To make things worse the recession broke upon a world economy which had undergone vast changes. Most important was the fact that capitalism had become truly international. Overseas capital investment, first by the US, then by Western Europe and Japan, meant the growth of huge multinationals which owed allegiance to no single nation, and which were often as powerful as sovereign states. Simultaneously, the growth of the Eurocurrency markets, over which national governments have little control, abrogated awesome power to private capital. Foreign exchange dealings, according to Sutcliffe, amount to 20 times the value of world trade in goods and services.

Faced with this expansion of international capital even the most powerful states are often forced to act contrary to their putative national interests. Much to Thatcher's chagrin, British banks played a leading role in bailing out Argentina, and the West was forced to reschedule Polish debts despite Reagan's rhetorical bombast. In both cases, to have pulled the plug would have sunk the international banking system as well as the individual countries concerned. Harris is particularly good on the web-like complexity of world finance.

Both books agree on the essentials of the crisis, but there is a world of difference in style. *Hard Times* is one of the 'Arguments for Socialism' series, in the same 'teach-yourself' vein as its predecessors. The prose is solid and serious, but readable, with a wealth of pertinent statistical information. You can excuse the odd flight of fancy, like 'maggots on the rotting flesh of capitalism'. *Of Bread and Guns* will be required reading for all economic history students, but Harris has the ability to rise above the merely academic. He has a telling eye for the apposite analogy, and moves well from the intricacies of economic argument to the human dimension. The chapter which gives the book its title is a controlled and sustained attack on the system which produces arms aplenty but which cannot feed the world's population. 'Thus, people die by the accident of being unprofitable.'

So it's a shame that both books finish unsatisfactorily. The only way out of the mess, they conclude, is by violent world revolution. In the circumstances, it's rather like identifying a heavily booby-trapped bomb, describing its mechanism in fine detail, and then deciding that the only way to deal with it is to blow the thing up, bomb-disposal expert and all – with the world's masses as the bomb disposal expert. □

LEBANON
Christopher Hitchens

Multiple injuries

Lebanon: The Fractured Country
DAVID GILMOUR *Martin Robertson* £9.95
God Cried
TONY CLIFTON and CATHERINE LEROY
Quartet £15

The *fractured* country? It might be better, or rather it might be more accurate, to characterise Lebanon as amputated, maimed, dismembered. Fractures mend, even heal. Partitions don't. And Lebanon is being partitioned before our very eyes. Despite the understatement contained in his title, David Gilmour has provided the background and history necessary to explain the present.

Lebanon is, of course, itself a compound fracture. It is a limb of Syria, broken off by the French colonial power in order to serve as an example of the 'civilising mission' in the Levant. Syria, to this day, does not recognise the country as a separate entity. But even if Lebanon had remained a province of Greater Syria, it would still be the site of an unusual mosaic of racial and religious pluralism and it would require the autonomy and tolerance that go with it. Whether it would have got that is a futile question predicating the answer 'no'. But the fact is that it failed to evolve a genuine pluralism, and none of its neighbours were anxious that it should set such a bad example.

The Lebanese establishment conducted itself with amazing *hubris*. It evaded the problem of confessional rivalry by resorting to a bogus 'power sharing' based on sectarian head-counting. And it used this hypocritical spoil system to postpone any reform of its grotesque social structure. The first thing that any visitor to Beirut had to notice was the almost deliberate contrast between the Corniche set, moving in Porsches festooned with skis from their beach clubs to their mountain resorts, and the sullen misery of the *bidonvilles*. As Gilmour rightly says, there was no excuse for ignorance because the slums and shanties were situated on all the main access roads.

In these awful quarters lived the Palestinians: the *x* factor in the Lebanese equation. Until their arrival, there had been a slender chance that the country could carry on as a sort of bourgeois Eldorado; a place where wealth was everything and where the poor were kept indefinitely subject to varieties of religious opiate. But the irruption of the displaced refugees made two kinds of difference. First, it brought a politically conscious and disenfranchised minority into play. Second, it brought the retribution of those who had evicted them from Palestine (and who still seem unable to sleep until they have banished them even further away). It's pretty well known by now, also, that the Zionist movement had long coveted Southern Lebanon. (Its revisionist wing, which under Menachem Begin's leadership has now effectively hegemonised Israel, always fancied the Litani river as a northern border.) Their 'hot pursuit' of the PLO, and their gradual absorption of part of yet another neighbour, is part rationalisation and part fulfilment of an old design.

This means, as we old Fleet St hands say, that one thing is certain – Lebanon will never be the same again. The traditional 'Za'im' system, whereby a clientèle of priests and mullahs arranged political life and 'delivered' on local favours and promotions, is gone or going. Beirut, which desecrated itself by greed and by promiscuous pseudo-development, has now been devastated by invaders who *really* mean business. And the political state, which was itself the product of balkanisation, has now been balkanised again. Today, the Syrians are helping the Druze against the Maronites. Yesterday, it was the other way around. Israel, which publicly regards Syria as its toughest Arab foe, is in private arranging a re-drawing of the map between itself and Damascus. Gilmour, who explains the origin of Syrian claims with admirable lucidity, seems unsure whether or not he supports them. His sympathy for the oppressed Palestinians and for elements of the Lebanese left shines through his account. The other actors seem to earn from him only a mild disgust and a polite weariness with their evidently limitless cynicism.

Tony Clifton is less ambivalent still. His book, which was composed during the thick of battle last summer, is intended as an ovation to the tenacity of the PLO, and as a shout of fury against the Israeli rape of Beirut. Having covered Lebanon for *Newsweek* over the years, and having had to observe the bland and judicious conventions of 'even-handed' journalism, he's yelled 'sod it!' and gone on a spree. Good for him. The result, and your opinion of it, will depend on how you like your blow-by-blow raw reportage. If you like it in one great splurge of anger and bile, vividly delivered all over your head and shoulders, then this is the book for you. Here is the apotheosis of the Pilger school: a massive chunder of heartfelt and pent-up commitment.

And why not? Clifton's book reminded

Lachlan Mackinnon

Afternoons

Sucking the thermometer like a lollipop,
childhood seemed to be one long
convalescence I hoped would never end . . .
I drowned in Dickens, far too young
to think of the lifebelts I throw my pupils
now.
I fell into long sleeps, I dreamed
of a man going to the guillotine
whose one legacy was a dog
that kicked up the shingle as it ran
round a beached and deserted houseboat.
A salt wind peeled off from the stamping sea.

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me of images from last year that I had begun to forget. The splash of phosphorus on undefended hospitals; the cluster-bomb shards lashing through the camps; the ceaseless and repetitive lies of Ariel Sharon; his collusion (to put it tenderly) in the filthy massacres of Sabra and Shatila; above all the naming of the whole business as 'Operation Peace for Galilee'. To read *God Cried* (a bad title based on a stale and feeble joke), and to view Ms Leroy's photographs, is to be reminded of what ought not to be allowed to fade.

Israel's media apologists found a slightly shabby way of changing the subject last summer. They opted, as well they might, for long and dubious critiques of the press coverage of the aggression. *Encounter, Commentary, The New Republic, Policy Review,* one by one all chose this diversionary course. There was, as usual, the poorly-disguised innuendo that critics of Begin and Sharon were motivated by anti-Semitism (an innuendo that failed to blackmail tens of thousands of Israeli demonstrators against the policy of atrocity). Clifton, who has taken a risk with his employers in signing this book, will confirm the most morbid apprehensions of the zealots. For one thing, he has discarded 'objectivity'. For another, I'm sorry to say, he has allowed himself some rather risky historical allusions. Beirut was not the Warsaw ghetto. Damour is not Masada. It's true that Israeli propaganda debases the memory of the Holocaust in order to excuse Begin's racialist and colonial policies. But that is no excuse for not treating Jewish history with scrupulous respect for proportion. Clifton may have been in a rage when he saw the mass terror and murder inflicted on Beirut; but had he been more careful at the typewriter, his argument would not have been diluted by the leaving-out of such ill-advised parallels. He might also have spared us some of the Michael Herr stuff about how the war correspondent of today lurches from bed to bottle to telex. We *know* war is hell. The cult of the macho Commodore Hotel bar doesn't underline the point.

Towards the end of the siege of Beirut, when the Palestinians had been bullied and tricked into believing that their families would not be slaughtered if they agreed to evacuate, there was much speculation about where they would go. A green American reporter received a cable from his mid-Western office inquiring, 'Why can't they go to Palestine?'. That, you may be sure, was the occasion for a lot of hearty laughter and some serious rounds of Commodore drinks. In fact, the question is a very pertinent one. The original sin of expulsion has led to the subsequent sins of occupation and of vindictive terror. Clifton describes these well enough, and he's seen more of the heat of it at closer quarters than I have. Holidays from the requirements of the two-faced news editor are, however, one thing. Holidays from reality are another. Clifton describes the exuberant PLO evacuation of Beirut as undertaken 'not because they had to, but because the leaders had decided that the time had come to move out and live to fight another day'. Now, why would he say a thing like that? □

CHINA
Jonathan Mirsky

Indulgence

From the Center of the Earth: The Search for the Truth about China
RICHARD BERNSTEIN *Hutchinson* £9.95

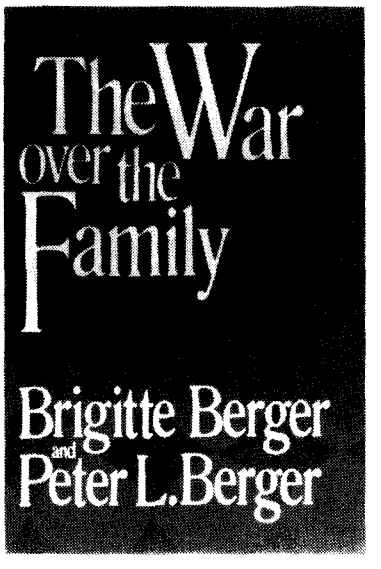
If there is anyone left in the *New Statesman* readership who believes that China today is a revolutionary socialist country rather than an ex-revolutionary one led by ex-socialist authoritarians, Richard Bernstein's book should finish them off. Bernstein's misfortune, however, is that since Mao's death in 1976, the Chinese authorities have disclosed many of the late chairman's 'tragic errors' and admitted faults and lies that China's worst enemies barely suspected. Much of this has appeared in the Western press. In the last few years we have had a flow of 'I Saw China' volumes of which the latest and in some ways the most effective was *China: Alive in the Bitter Sea*, by Fox Butterfield of the *New York Times*.

Bernstein, *Time Magazine's* Peking man for two years, goes over the same ground from the vantage point of the capital, makes a few forays to the usual other (permitted) places and makes the same points. And, like his predecessors, Bernstein fires exocets into the Chinese body-politic which many Chinese would – privately – support. Unlike some of his predecessors, however, Bernstein has a tin ear. On every page we find his inability to resist a weakening modifier: 'rather shyly', 'extreme reluctance', 'stately passage'. He thinks 'saccharine' and 'treacly' can be used interchangeably to describe Chinese soft drinks. Nor can he distinguish between his private dislikes, for fat pork, smelly loos, bruised fruit and charmless rooms, and the savageries of the State. They seem to irritate him equally.

But Bernstein is psychologically acute. He notes that for the most part western specialists on the Soviet Union have disliked the place and have therefore savaged the system. Sinologists, by contrast, have tended to love, or think they love, China, feel guilty about imperialism, and until recently pulled their critical punches.

What Bernstein perceives here is condescension. Mao and his comrades, who did much the same thing as Stalin and stacked up their own horrific body count are let off because, Bernstein observes, 'many credulous western visitors assumed that the personal needs of the Chinese existed on a smaller scale than in the individualistic West. This I find a demeaning and even unconsciously racist notion.'

Three or four years ago Bernstein's passionate memoir would have cracked open many a prejudice; but earlier writers, the western press and the Chinese themselves have pre-empted him. □



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Diversity and Depth in Fiction: Selected Critical Writings

ANGUS WILSON ed. KERRY McSWEENEY
Secker £15

Some novelists, like Malcom Bradbury and David Lodge, are also critics; others, like Angus Wilson, simply write some criticism. Those of the first category tend to be conventionally 'objective', those of the second incline towards a more personal touch. Certainly, the personal note resounds throughout this selection from the reviews, articles, introductions, lectures, broadcasts and interviews that Wilson has generated since the Fifties. Discussing 'The Dilemma of the Contemporary Novelist' and 'The Novelist and the Narrator', Wilson garners illustrations from his own work; he discusses favourite writers in terms of their impact upon his imagination (Dickens, Woolf, Proust, Dorothy Richardson) or their relationship to his abiding preoccupations: the problem of dealing with evil fictionally (Samuel Richardson, William Godwin, Woolf, John Cowper Powys) and the direction taken by the 20th-century English novel (Woolf, Compton-Burnett, Henry Green). Unsurprisingly, this volume demonstrates that Wilson's critical preferences have paralleled his creative style. Reacting against modernism in the early Fifties, he favoured – in his fiction and non-fiction – 'a return to the traditional novel'. By the end of the decade, he was commending 'experimental' techniques, having begun to incorporate them into his own work.

In this book, Wilson proves a better essayist than reviewer or lecturer, and better on individual writers than on general themes. He embraces an array of English authors, ranging chronologically from Samuel Richardson to Isherwood, together with a handful of Europeans (including, naturally, his revered Zola). There are especially fine appraisals of Austen – a useful antidote to Janeite panegyric – and Arnold Bennett. Curiously, these are perhaps the least personal items in the volume. Nevertheless, as both Wilson and editor McSweeney implicitly acknowledge, it will be that personal element – 'the light that is thrown on Wilson's own fictions' – which comprises the primary attraction of this selection.

David Montrose

Making It Public

DEXTER WHITFIELD *Pluto* £2.50

Planning Is Good For You

GEORGE BLAZYCA *Pluto* £2.50

These two short books are among the latest titles in 'Arguments for Socialism' – a series of socialist primers begun in September 1982. The series is intended to explain clearly and carefully current socialist political economy and the style of writing is, therefore, as important as content. Whitfield writes as an activist and journalist and his case against Tory policy on privatisation is made with passion and clarity. Blazyca, however, has produced one of those introductory texts, beloved by socialist academics, which attempt to explain complex ideas in *very simple words*. There is a difference between non-technical writing and condescension and it's surprising that he didn't include study notes to round-off a badly written book.

That said, *Planning Is Good For You* is certainly useful. Blazyca's main arguments are that socialist planning can work on a macro-economic level, and that the important issue is not technical feasibility but democracy and control. He demonstrates convincingly the ineptitude of East European and Russian state planning although he doesn't have the space to distinguish between the economies of, say, Yugoslavia and the GDR. Calling for a new socialist social policy, he makes no reference to the book *Manifesto*, published two years ago, which attempted to do this.

A detailed bibliography is needed in *Making It Public* but, apart from this, it's an excellent book, a model of its kind. Whitfield's arguments are drawn from the political experience of activists in the public sector. He lists all the evidence against privatising public services, shows who is backing it and why, and then maps out a strategy of resistance. If, at times, Whitfield glosses over the ideology of 'the public', he does admit that many public services have behaved badly and bureaucratically. And he sketches a dreadful vision of private health, education, housing and transport.

These books aren't major theoretical debates but interventions in political struggle. The image received from *Making It Public* is of a NUPE shop-steward waving the book at a private garbage company. Discretion forbids the image from Blazyca.

David Berry

Down & Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Men

ed. ROBERT S. McELVAINE *North Carolina*
£19.55 & £7.60

From letters written by ordinary people to Hoover, Roosevelt, the odd senator and government official in the years of the American Depression, Robert S. McElvaine has compiled a fascinating, touching and above all illuminating book. As he says in his preface, the men and women who are represented by the 173 letters printed here 'have been forgotten for so long not because they were silent but because their stories were not valued as they should have been'.

Franklin Roosevelt, in his radio 'fireside chats', encouraged people to write in to him. Eleanor Roosevelt followed suit. In the week following the inauguration, '450,000 letters poured into the White House. For years the average remained at 5,000 to 8,000 communications each day'. They all received form answers, mostly signed by the President himself, 'who sometimes read a sampling' of them, 'to renew his sense of contact with raw opinion'.

Opinion doesn't come much rawer than it is expressed in these letters. They are reproduced here without any tampering with spelling or grammar, e.g.:

> in regard to condition I am in I have Not got any work and No where to put My thing I have got My house hold setting in a wood shed and the rain is runing ever thing I have got I thought I would write you and see if you help me get Me a tent are some place to take my wife and thing

– this gives them a rare sense of immediacy, of living (but barely) history.

It's all here, the corruption, injustice and prejudice of Jacks-in-office; the anger, humiliation and despair of people confronted by the failure of the American capitalist dream, which then was indistinguishable from the Victorian one. The Victorian virtues of hard work, thrift and general godliness had been pumped into these people all their lives. When they discovered that it was just a great capitalist confidence trick, it was too late for anger and constructive action. Most were stunned, or rendered apathetic by desperate poverty, or overwhelmed by guilt: it they were poor now, it must be that they hadn't worked and saved hard enough. The chapter on 'The Rebellious' shows the first glimmerings of socialist consciousness.

This book is a classic. No *NS* reader should be without it.

Anne Smith

The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad: Volume 1, 1861-1897

ed. FREDERICK R. KARL and LAURENCE DAVIES
Cambridge £19.50

Accustomed to the authority and permanence of print, published writers tend to introduce an element of intellectual ostentation into letters on the assumption that they are addressing the world as much as any individual. After the publication of *Almayer's Folly*, on 19 April 1895, Conrad was no exception to the rule that first novelists are instantly transformed into self-conscious men of letters. Writing to Edward Noble, on 2 November 1895, he reveals a new epistolary obsession with his own personality:

> No man's light is good to any of his fellows. That's my creed – from beginning to end. That's my view of life – a view that rejects all formulas, dogmas and principles of other people's making. These are only a web of illusions. We are too varied. Another man's truth is only a dismal lie to me.

Obviously Noble kept this communication and it is now delivered to the large audience for whom it was intended.

Conrad was a prolific correspondent reckoned to have written more than 3,500 letters in Polish, French and English; those in Polish are given in translation only, those in French in the original and translation. This first volume of a projected eight-volume edition of the letters ranges from 1861 to 1897 and covers more than half of the author's life. Clearly Conrad's first surviving letter has historic importance. At the time of its composition, on 23 May 1861, Conrad was three-and-a-half and his father, Apollo Korzeniowski, was away from home working for the Red faction of Polish nationalists. 'Daddy', writes young Konrad, 'I am fine here, I run about the garden – but I don't like it much when the mosquitoes bite. As soon as the rain stops I will come to you.' Retrospectively that can be taken as the first statement of Conrad's lifelong impulse to be on the move in a search for a suitable haven.

As Laurence Davies acknowledges in his introduction, the first volume has 'mysterious and infuriating gaps'. There is nothing from Conrad's adolescence, nothing from the crucial stay in Marseille, nothing from his early career in the Merchant Navy. Such omissions Davies attributes to 'war and revolution, fire and water' and other accidents. What remains, however, is of immense importance in illustrating the evolution of Conrad as an individual whose lust for exploration moved from the facts of a life at sea to a highly original fiction. The book contains letters to fellow writers (like R. B. Cunninghame-Graham), publishers (such as T. Fisher Unwin) and personal friends. Perhaps the most revealing letters are those in French to his honorary aunt, the author Marguerite Poradowska, who provided a necessary link with Poland. In his correspondence with her Conrad is seen in the process of preferring words to water. This illuminating and expertly edited book is indispensable for an understanding of an enigmatic author.

Alan Bold

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FICTION
Angela McRobbie

On the inside

Love and Glory
MELVYN BRAGG *Secker* £7.95
I'm Not Complaining
RUTH ADAM *Virago* £3.95

It's as though (and I make no claims to be a psychologist) there's something in all of us which is simply unspeakable. Not monstrous or murderous, merely drab, inconsequential, cowardly and resistant to change. When self-images like these burst to the surface we tend rapidly to brush them away, or to extinguish them with a slightly frantic gesture. At any rate we want to deny them the light of day. They are everything that desired images of subjectivity are not. Far from being part of the contemporary drive to find a true inner self and to get in touch with one's well-shaped body, these fragments throw the self into a panic of doubt and insecurity, they become part of the problem. Nothing could be further from today's popular fantasies, from the **Love and Glory** Melvyn Bragg refers to in his latest novel of the same name, than these miserable and unmentionable moments.

Still, they have always found a space waiting for them in fiction or in drama. There these unmistakably awful features can take on living, breathing dimensions. They can also, as a result of their undesirable status, build up a peculiar moral momentum. In Orwell, in Arthur Miller and now, less surely, in Bragg, the characters who come to epitomise such values occupy positions both near to and removed from the heart-lands of power and public visibility. This allows them to speak through the sham of it all, the pettiness and the daily unscrupulousness of its administrators. But then, as it draws to a close, they too are written out of it. They may linger on morally but they come to be complemented, if not altogether eclipsed by, the figure of the successful author, the personality or celebrity who has, after all, been the one to put pen to paper.

This is exactly what happens in *Love and Glory*. Willie Armstrong is near enough to the upper reaches of the media to see it all happen, but he is also modest and minor enough to suffer the indignity and humiliation of seeing himself demoted and threatened with redundancy, which is to say that he makes obituary documentaries for an unnamed TV channel. He is also nearing middle age, uncomfortably middle-class; his wife drinks too much and his life lacks passion.

Armstrong is in every way opposite to his magnetic actor friend who is so successful that he can afford to take up, temporarily, with a left-wing community theatre group; take up, also temporarily, with a CND-oriented young actress and then depart, leaving wife and mistress distraught, to New York – where of course there is a lot more action. There are, for instance, Grace Jones-like women, left intellectuals, and ethnic spice in Harlem. Back in Camden Town, Willie has fallen for the young actress. But he wines and dines her a little too extravagantly and fails to win her heart (she goes back to Glasgow). At the same time his mother is dying, his job is in jeopardy and his relationships are suddenly vacuous.

The world of *Love and Glory* lies somewhere between Posy Simmonds and *The Ploughman's Lunch*. A heavily London-based account of life in Britain today, with some cynicism, some insight, a little love, but unfortunately little analysis. And frequently Bragg just can't resist the temptation of throwing in fragments of some half-written sociology lecture. His favourite topics seem to be the media and youth culture and, while I can quite understand the attraction of these subjects, well, he doesn't quite get them right: 'They spoke cod cockney or pastiche posh: they dressed the men half young buck, half heavy metal, the women part pert tart, part careless art student.' Later in the novel, when the writing becomes easier, the underlying moral force finds surer ground, and what emerges is a kind of modest decency, a suggestion that to walk not so much on the wild side but steadfastly on the inside needn't be such a shameful solution.

THERE IS A LOT of shame in Ruth Adam's **I'm Not Complaining**, much of it by now thankfully quite outdated. This novel is a remarkably interesting piece of social reportage. It first appeared in 1938 and describes the life of a self-confessed 'shabby old-maid schoolteacher'. It is this much maligned status which is the source of the main character's shame; and there is a sense in which she confirms all the old prejudices held against those women who have for years held the entire educational edifice together. She is only 30, but claims her days of courtship are over, and channels all her energies instead into the life of the school and the local community. While her resentment against the taunts and abuse she receives from men, children and other women feeds into an almost feminist polemic, her puritanism and her prurient interest in sex are likely, I think, to make any woman reader flinch with embarrassment. She loudly disapproves of tight dresses, of make-up, of the everyday vanity of femininity.

And yet, every so often, she betrays a deep longing to be in there, in the heart of sexual intrigue and sexual encounter. Not surprisingly, this missing sexuality finds some expression in gossip and speculation. And so, in her account of teaching in a rough elementary school in Nottinghamshire, we find details of illegal abortion, child abuse, sexual violence and prostitution. We also witness working-class riots and demonstrations, thug-like policemen, a communist in the classroom, and a strongly left-wing vicar. This makes for uneven reading, with the narrative veering from racy melodrama to solemn documentary. □

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MUSIC
Andrew Clements

Room for growth

LONDON probably offers more contemporary music, adequately performed, than any other city, European or American. It also has a larger and more knowledgeable audience, a hard core of concert-goers who keep themselves well informed and eagerly support any worthwhile attempt to break new ground. Even if this faithful band still represents only a minuscule fraction of the musical public in the capital, there is room for a certain amount of satisfaction at the current state of things.

There is also still plenty to complain about. The independent London orchestras (with the possible exception of the Du Maurier-sponsored Philharmonia) appear to have dropped any pretence that they are interested in playing new music; their absence from the programme of the recently announced 'Music of Eight Decades' series supported by the BBC and the London Orchestral Concerts Board is final official recognition of that. For large and small orchestral events we must rely now on the good offices of the BBC Symphony and the irreplaceable London Sinfonietta, and though there are inevitable biases and lacunae their coverage is as committed as we have a right to expect.

On a smaller scale, too, new-music groups continue to proliferate and their standard rises steadily. There is so much going on at the height of the season, sometimes several equally worthy events on a single evening, that one might find it difficult to believe that whole areas of contemporary music are systematically ignored. Once upon a time it was so-called experimental music, English and American, that could not be heard; now the neglect is more insidious and endemic to several schools and movements. Major European composers – Kagel, Nono, Schnebel, Bussotti – get virtually no exposure at all; their lesser compatriots are unknown, and of whole generations of American composers we know only a few names. Despite its seeming generosity, new-music programming is largely complacent and parochial.

The virtues of Adrian Jack's MusICA series, its success in combating these attitudes over several seasons, have cropped up here with, I hope, the regularity they deserve. The present series – the fifth – ends on Sunday, with a programme by Alvin Lucier, and it might well be the last. There has been no lack of success this summer; almost all of the concerts have played to full houses, and the range of events has been typically inventive. Jack's ability to fasten on to composers and performing groups that would otherwise not be heard here has filled many holes – music by Goeyvaerts, Guezec, Scelsi and Gerald Barry in previous years, and in the past two months programmes devoted to Horatio Radulescu, Stephen Reeve, Kagel and more Scelsi. Not every concert has been an equal success; the programming would be a good deal more bland had that to be assured. But there has been no hesitation in repeating past triumphs – the first concert in July this year given by the Arditti Quartet included again Nono's **Fragmente-Stille, An Diotima**, a set of meditations on Holderlin that seem to initiate a new phase in his development, one concerned with texture and the most evanescent poetic effects.

Last weekend saw the most ambitious MusICA project so far, a staging of Kagel's 'allegory' **Mare Nostrum**, given two performances. For me at least a small helping of Kagel's humour goes a long way, and a 75-minute satire on colonisation needs more than a few running verbal jokes to sustain it.

A tribe from the Amazon invades the Mediterranean and proceeds to pacify the inhabitants of its shores. They observe the customs from Portugal ('It was so nice to eye all of them kneeling down with closed lids . . . trying to gawk up at heaven'), through Spain and France to Italy, Greece, Turkey and Israel (the 'Land of Unchosen Whiners'). The story is related as a sequence of episodes by one of the invaders (a baritone) in broken English (the source of much of the humour), the natives are represented by a cowering, ingratiating counter-tenor; a paddling pool stands for the Mediterranean, *mare nostrum*. The verbal jokes are tiresome, and a musical parody of Mozart's *Rondo alla turca* in the Turkish episode is too protracted. Some of Kagel's other interludes have a spidery beauty of their own, but the overriding impression was of disappointing thinness. Yet so little of Kagel's music theatre has been staged here that just a flavour of it, and *Mare Nostrum* certainly has a distinct individuality, is long overdue. (When the London Sinfonietta moves into music theatre, as planned for next year when it combines with Opera Factory to present Tippett's *Knot Garden*, it will be interesting to see if Kagel is included in its plans.)

Kagel: neglected in Britain

Those opportunities for discovery that MusICA has provided will entirely disappear if the series folds. The primary problem is of course financial: the ICA provides half the budget for MusICA out of its own funds and expects Jack to raise the rest from other sponsors. He was successful this year, though one event had to be cancelled for want of less than £1,000, but such a hand-to-mouth existence must necessarily be ephemeral. Yet from the outside one wonders about the commitment to contemporary music within the management of the ICA itself. It pays lip service to the idea of MusICA, welcomes the praise the series receives in the press, but does not seem to put itself out overmuch to support it.

The theatre is by far the best venue for concerts within the ICA building, it has raked seating and a decently sized performing space, even if the acoustics are less than ideal. Yet only *Mare Nostrum* was able to use the theatre in the present series. All of the other events took place in upstairs rooms, spacious Regency rooms certainly, but with a limited seating capacity and carefully tucked away from restaurant and bar up several flights of stairs. So at almost every concert there was the ridiculous sight of a substantial queue turned away simply because the room was full to overflowing with no more than 70 in the audience. And this for a series with desperate money troubles.

There are no doubt many competing factions within the ICA. It must give what it can to MusICA out of its Arts Council subvention; and the result is that a series of contemporary-music concerts receives no money from the music division of the Arts Council at all for the ICA's funding is a general Council grant. One of the most adventurous and significant contributions to London's music receives no direct recognition from the single most important benefactor of new music. That may be a bureaucratic problem that cannot be solved. What is entirely within the ICA's ability to solve is the absurd situation over accommodation; it is hardly asking too much for the theatre to be made available to MusICA for ten Sundays out of the year. If that cannot be managed, it does not deserve to play host to such a prestigious series of concerts. □

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FILMS
John Coleman

Cutting in

The Leopard (PG)
Gate, Notting Hill
The Pirates of Penzance (U)
Classic, Shaftesbury Avenue
Wild Style!
ICA
The Twilight Zone (15)
general release

We may yet come to look back in confusion on the Eighties as the cinema's Restoration period. After full houses at the NFT, Cimino's full-length *Heaven's Gate* is shortly to return to the West End; and the latest news from the Venice festival is of an expanded re-issue of the 1954 (and Judy Garland) remake of *A Star is Born*. All very well to replace the missing pieces in genuinely mutilated classics, but already one trembles for the day when old cutting-room floors are swept squeaky-clean and the three-hour version of *Abbott and Costello Meet the Mummy* sprawls across our wall-size TV screens. Meanwhile, there is cause for temperate rejoicing, the chance – after 20 years – to see one of the over-rated Luchino Visconti's very best films, **The Leopard**, pretty much as he intended we should before Fox mucked it about, lopping off some 25 minutes, printing on De Luxe instead of Technicolor, dubbing it into often jarring English.

Time plays weird tricks with memory and this refurbished, subtitled *Leopard* has inspired an odd mix of reviews, lauding the marvellous Giuseppe Rotunno's colour photography in the ball sequence (to me still Hollywood-garish), disagreeing over whether Burt Lancaster's magistral, waning Prince sounds better in Italian (he doesn't, though almost every one else in an international cast does), in one instance getting the final moments appallingly wrong (and this from the author of the *Cinema One* book on Visconti). What surprised me most is that certain longueurs I listed in my largely favourable 1963 notice are now less evident. More makes more sense. The insertion of several tiny scenes and flashbacks startlingly enriches the whole. And the filling-out of that bravura, culminating grand ball – during which themes from Lampedusa's novel of Sicily and the Risorgimento, of decadent aristocracy ruefully making way for a corrupt new bourgeoisie, are finely choreographed and orchestrated – somehow enlarges the centrality of the Prince. Scraps of street-fighting are woefully mishandled. Claudia Cardinale's raucous, peasant laughter at a risqué dinner-table anecdote is too protracted for anyone's comfort. There are lapses. But whenever we are invited to view through the Prince's (and surely Visconti's) eyes we are on firm and visually fascinating ground. No wonder the maker of *La Terra Trema* came in for harsh words at the time from the politically committed.

Diehard D'Oyly-Cartesians may likewise feel outraged, confronted by Wilford Leach's **The Pirates of Penzance**, in essence a film transcription of Joseph Papp's zippy Broadway adaptation. At least, I am given to understand the affair is liberty-taking: me, I wouldn't know, having gone to considerable and hitherto successful lengths to distance myself from any manifestation of the works of Gilbert and Sullivan. Even so, enough snippets have slipped through my guard for an awareness of the relentless virtuosity of Gilbert's lyrics, of those oh-so-Britishly facetious patter-songs woodpeckering away at the head, to have nightmarishly accrued. Leach also wrote the screenplay for this *Pirates*, whatever that means – introducing a comparison-shopping irruption of the cast into a Savoyard-style amateur production of *HMS Pinafore*, maybe. Archness is piled upon archness as Leach the director encourages Kevin Kline's Pirate King to come on like a fumbling Fairbanks Sr and the 'tarantara' constabulary to cavort like refugees from Mack Sennett.

Pop-singer Linda Ronstadt warbles very sweetly as Mabel (God, this is embarrassing), the seashore set looks rather awful and there is an Intermission, presumably for tea and biscuits to be brought round on trays. Those unacquainted with the 'plot' are better off that way and will find no help here. P.S. I *quite* liked it when the policemen kept singing, 'We go, we go', and didn't.

As a diametrically opposed culture-shock, Charlie Ahearn's **Wild Style!** is warmly recommended, if more tepidly in its own right. Ahearn, a 32-year-old white filmmaker, knows the South Bronx backwards, which appears to be the right way round. Here he has constructed a loose, mainly upbeat and sentimental fictional framework for an eye-popping view and ear-splitting audition of black and Hispanic street- and club-art manifestations. Raymond (real-life spray graffiti artist 'Lee' George Quinones) does his thing on trains and walls, nearly loses his girl to a gang of street muralists, is taken up by Manhattan arty-smarties (coolly playing themselves), finally decorates a huge bandshell or amphitheatre. On this site, a closing concert incorporates all the other home-grown cultural novelties scattered throughout: rapping (rhyming talk over disco music), scratching (shifting a record to and fro for a recurrent beat), and some incredible break dancing. Rough it may be, but this Lower East Side ghetto enterprise is vibrant where that chic phoney *Flashdance* was hollow as hell.

Those with fond recollections of a Rod Serling-written US TV series of the Sixties include Steven Spielberg and John Landis, who have now produced and part-directed a four-item homage, **The Twilight Zone**: unwisely. Spielberg's old-folks'-home tale shows his soft underbelly at its sagging-est. Landis's 'Prologue' has a horrific second but his longer story, hammering in an anti-racist message, is homiletic tosh. George (*Mad Max*) Miller tediously toys with an hysterical plane passenger and something nasty out on a wing. Best of a bruised bunch of bananas is Joe Dante's fantasy, written by Richard Matheson, about an eerie boy who has a household in thrall to his TV-cartoon bad magic. □

THEATRE
Christopher Edwards

Writing pool

Tales from Hollywood
CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON *Olivier*
The Killing of Mr Toad
DAVID GOODERSON *King's Head*

Christopher Hampton's association with Horvath has already proved fruitful – his translations of *Tales from the Vienna Woods* and *Don Juan Comes Back from the War* were both staged at the National. Now he has invented a Horvath of his very own, and written the Hungarian playwright in as a character/narrator in this new play, set in Hollywood between the years 1938-1950. If Horvath himself ever entertained any notions of fleeing to Hollywood he was unlucky; as you enter the auditorium screens on stage remind you that 'He was killed on 1 June 1938 in a freak accident on the Champs-Elysée when a branch of the chestnut tree under which he was sheltering fell on his head.' At his death, however, he had been working on a new novel and it was the first line of his notes that gave Hampton his point of departure for this work : 'Ein Poet emigriert nach Amerika.'

The exodus of artists from Nazi Germany to America in the Thirties created an extraordinary pool of displaced creative talent centred around Los Angeles; their number included Thomas and Heinrich Mann, Bertolt Brecht and Schönberg. For writers the most obvious way to earn a living was to work in the movies and, thanks to Warner Bros and the European Film Fund, this is what many of them did. The coming together, under the roof of the same tinsel industry, of Brecht, Greta Garbo and the Marx Brothers does have a bizarre feel to it and Hampton couldn't resist Stoppardian touches – as when Johnny Weissmuller swings down in his trunks to greet the startled author of *Buddenbrooks*. But this is just a piece of local colouring, nipped in the bud by Horvath himself – 'I need hardly say the reality was very different'.

But was it? Hampton gives you a sense of the myopic values governing show business with a couple of telling quotes from *Variety*, like 'Hitler's reshuffling of Central Europe represents a loss of 2½ to 3% of total foreign film income!' Pity the poor movie moguls, all you refugees! Hampton also includes a hilarious little scene between Horvath and Charles 'Chuck' Money, a cigar-chewing

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producer (brilliantly played by John Bluthal) who wants a 'treatment' of Edward II to fill a gap in the domestic market left by *The Adventures of Robin Hood*.

I suppose what Hampton wants you to understand by the true 'reality' is the suffering, the dilemmas, the moral equivocations of these German writers who agonised about their Fatherland while living incomparably more comfortable lives than their countrymen. Not that they ever seem to have felt any less displaced in their shallow materialistic Californian paradise; as Brecht put it, it was like being a sausage in a greenhouse. With only one exception, though, I couldn't treat their angst seriously. That exception was Philip Locke's portrait of Heinrich Mann, the 70-year-old elder (and less fêted) brother of Thomas. He forms the emotional axis of the play, and his account of his flight from Europe over the Pyrenees is genuinely touching. His handling, too, of the scenes with his alcoholic wife Nelly (Billie Whitelaw trying with mixed success to be vulgar) gave him a rather beautiful dignity. But of the other principals, I found that Ian McDiarmid turned Brecht into a self-conscious jester at the emigré court. It is always a pleasure to hear this actor's brand of acerbity, and to watch his mobile ratty features, but his knowingness on this occasion, and the way he played up to the idea of the *enfant terrible*, prevented him from being taken seriously. Despite a few witty remarks, Hampton just didn't make him – or any of the other German writers – appear plausibly possessed of a distinguished mind. This comes back to a point I was making in connection with Dusty Hughes's new play at the Hampstead about an English don; too often in contemporary drama you have to take on trust that the writer-characters, despite their dull, desultory chat, can actually produce great books.

Michael Gambon's Horvath is an assured, ironical study and he scores easily off Guy Rolfe's pompous, bourgeois Thomas Mann. It is no fault of Gambon's if the device of narrator commenting on and partaking in the action fails to link up the episodic structure of a production which, despite Alison Chitty's attractive period props, left me cold.

The 'Toad' referred to in the title of David Gooderson's play with music is not Kenneth Grahame's famously bumptious character from *The Wind in the Willows*; it is Grahame's own sad, half-blind son Alastair to whom Grahame told the Toad story while he was at school. Unable either to cope with the expectations of a pushy mother, or to pass his preliminary exams at Oxford, Alastair lay down in front of an express train and was decapitated. Perhaps, though, he was just unable to bear the thought of growing up – a family trait, of course, and one which allowed his father to compose a classic of children's fiction.

The opening scene is very impressive; the widowed Mrs Elspeth Grahame (Deborah Norton) – an irascible, poor, genteel and slightly batty creature – potters about her room remembering the days when she first met her husband-to-be. Then there are the inevitable flashbacks: the cloying courtship ('two boats sharing the same wave'), the virtually sexless marriage, the rapid estrangement. Despite its over-expository method (too many hard dates and facts lumped into the dialogue) this is an entertaining, mordant piece. Rogert Austin is affecting as Grahame/Mole – lugubriously munching ice-cream, his eyes fixed dreamily upon posterity while his son capers desperately for attention. □

ARCHITECTURE
Jules Lubbock

In the dock

THE ARCHITECTURAL profession is once again on trial for its responsibility in the greatest planning disaster of all time – high-rise housing. The recent attack by RIBA president Michael Manser upon the press for its hostility to modern architecture has unleashed the most savage counter-attack since Ronan Point and the GLC's Covent Garden Plan. He would have done better to keep his mouth shut. Now that the bills are coming in it is estimated that the cost of repairing or demolishing one million dwellings built in the past 30 years could be as high as £10 billion, figures which represent a horrendous human cost.

The reason why the issue refuses to die, long after the high-rise policy was reversed in 1967, and despite the fact that architects stand condemned by public opinion, is that they still obstinately refuse to admit their guilt and try to shift the blame on to government or the construction industry, as well as to reduce the limitation on their liability for negligence to ten years. A public acknowledgment of guilt is the necessary first step in the reform of architectural education and the conduct of this shoddy profession.

I therefore recommend Mr Manser to read Patrick Dunleavy's meticulous historical account* of how the Tory Minister of Housing and his Permanent Secretary Dame Evelyn Sharp made the decision in 1956 to introduce the subsidies which so heavily favoured high-rise over houses. Dunleavy proves conclusively that it was taken on the almost unanimous advice of the RIBA establishment of the time. A crucial point is that, in time-honoured Civil Service fashion, Dame Evelyn does not seem to have sought an opposing opinion. And her failure to do so was compounded by a remarkable silence on the merits or demerits of high-rise in the national and local press until Ronan Point collapsed in 1968 – non-coverage arduously researched by Dr Dunleavy. This silence may be partly explained by the fact that the architectural correspondent of *The Times* was also the editor of the influential professional journal, the *Architectural Review*, which strongly supported the policy. What better example can there be of the case for open government? At the same time the cosy relationship between architectural journalists and architects was also to blame. Never again should journalists give architects even the benefit of the doubt.

The reforms in architectural practice are fundamental. For not only were people never consulted on how they wished to be housed; those opinions they were known to hold were dismissed with savage contempt. For example: Mass Observation showed in 1943 that 79% wanted a house with a garden, and that fewer wanted a flat (8%) than were living in one at the time (15%). The Attlee government, at least, respected these wishes, but it did not bother to discover the feelings later represented by Willmott and Young in their *Family and Kinship in East London*. In a letter to *The Times* of May 1957 the authors wrote that, having 'interviewed hundreds of local people, the overwhelming majority want a house, not a flat, inside, not outside, the East End'. They did not want their communities to be destroyed. The authors pointed out that this applied just as much to architects' dreams such as new towns and suburban estates as it did to flats. Yet officials who accepted that clearance had a 'devastating effect upon the social groups' argued, in the words of the Chief Planner in Newcastle and later of the DOE, that 'this is a good thing when we are dealing with people who have no initiative or civic pride. The task is surely to break up such groupings even though the people seemed to be satisfied with their miserable environment.'

Dunleavy's conclusion is that the major political legacy of the disaster has been to delegitimise the case for public housing, and to strengthen the case for private ownership – making the plight of inner-city dwellers three times as bad as it was. Finance for repairing or rehabilitating the old slums has dried up at a time when enormous sums are needed for replacing the new, and for repairing housing of the inter-war years which has reached the end of its planned life. Short of a massive redistribution of wealth private ownership is, of course, a non-starter.

When the RIBA Council has read Dunleavy its members should make a public atonement. But have they any new solutions? Well, one candidate is Community Architecture. In the wake of Brian Anson's 1973 project to involve the surviving working-class community of Covent Garden in a design for the Odham's site, a tiny pioneering minority of architects have been working on the principles of laymen like Colin Ward – first listening, then discussing and finally obeying the requirements of their client communities, assisting them in the struggle to gain power over their territory. The political implications are vast. It is not a cheap way out for a Tory government; nor is it the only solution. The community label is already being used as a sop by property speculators, local authorities and the RIBA. Whatever is decided, this time the debate must be an open one, and the *New Statesman*, for one, will be examining the issues and some of the projects in critical detail. □

**The Politics of Mass Housing in Britain, 1945-75*, Oxford 1981

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TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Some hope

SUPPORTING a heavy dictatorship habit must be rough in those bankrupt South American countries where even the supply of *desaparecidos* has to follow the law of diminishing returns. When his faithful pusher General Carlos Urzula finally OD'd on blood and medals last week, General Pinochet must have regretted the day he ever took up with that bad set at the Santiago Club. Still, he had to admit it made a great hook for **Ten Years of a Strong Man** (C4), the little love-letter the exiled Carmen Castillo sent him from Paris to remind him of what he had done to her and her country. 'Look', she told him, as we watched his men take aim at us on that day in September 1973, 'this man is filming his own death . . .' The screen went blank. 'The future?' said a woman in a shanty town. 'No future. I can't think about it.'

'You have to have money to imagine the future', said a coal fisherman scavenging debris from freezing waves. We saw women working on Pinochet's Minimal Employment Plan, building roads that lead nowhere. An architect took us round a bizarre fantasy of office-blocks which had mushroomed in downtown Santiago when Pinochet and his Friedmanite 'Chicago Boys' threw Chile's fragile economy on the open market. Credit was given to anyone for anything then, and a spending spree on imported goods crippled Chile's industries. Businessmen bought dollars and shifted them abroad, just as landowners had shifted their livestock and machinery to Argentina during Allende's land reforms. We saw a rotating restaurant frozen forever in 1977. 'We are stuck with these marvels', said the architect, 'everything belongs to the banks and is worth nothing.'

He might have been referring to the rotating figure of Cardinal Silva Henriques, robed in red silk, as he attended the celebration of the anniversary of the coup in Santiago Cathedral. I thought of the white horse running frightened through the streets of that town in the film *Missing*. 'Let me tell all those respectable organisations that take orders from Moscow,' said a panicking Pinochet, 'that I will be harsher than they can imagine.'

'I think one should be like a leaf in this life', said Dr Ruth Tichauer in **Doctors** (C4), as if she was prescribing for his particular sickness, 'surrender to the stream, as Rilke said, go where it wants to take you. You better do this. One doesn't know oneself very well.' Dr Tichauer came to Bolivia from Germany in 1941 to look after the nice families and the diplomatic corps. She got on better with the Amaya Indians: 'They survived the Incas, the Spaniards, the Republic. Now they must survive the Military. They need me.' We saw her holding one of her crowded chaotic surgeries where she tries to sort out legal as well as medical problems. 'There is no one like her in Bolivia', said a patient. 'No one pays her, yet she has more expenses than anyone. She even prepares our snacks.' We followed this saint-like figure's mobile clinic to one of the 'abandoned areas'. 'After my heart attack I was told I should think about a successor. Of course, this is quite false. When you do something you don't want to step in someone's shoes. You start afresh, everyone in his own way.'

It was Nicaragua's turn. With **An Evening for Nicaragua** at the Shaftesbury Theatre (C4), it fared less well than Chile or Bolivia. 'Usually with a benefit', said the compère, 'the compère has to come on and say "Paul McCartney can't make it, but here's Pam Ayres".' He might as well have said, 'Pam Ayres can't make it, but here's Benjamin Zephaniah.' Seriously reckoned by the anxious *Time Out*, Zephaniah will be the worst poet you ever encounter, no matter where you go in life. He is a sort of rasta-impressionist with a non-existent sense of timing, rhythm and humour. You have to hide your face. Rik Mayall's sense of rhythm was better, but his sense of humour had stayed home that night. He had got down some kind of authentic-sounding Northern hippy accent, right, but seemed to be hoping that the awful jokes could be faced up with amusing eye movements. 'Here's one for you, Nick Ragua', he went, 'what's the similarity between Lech Walesa and Menachim Begin?' Pause for eye-business. 'They've both got foreign names.' I hated myself for laughing.

More disturbing than the hell in South America (or the humour at the Shaftesbury) was the hell here at home as depicted in **Breadline Britain** (ITV), which had a resigned, elegiac tone new to this kind of programme, as if the game was now up. 'You see all these things on telly about the poverty abroad', said a young man taking us round a Fifties estate in Liverpool, now due for demolition, 'they ought to come here and take photographs of this lot.' Pamela's parents beat her, she told us, and stopped her going to school. She was in care at ten, ran away and now lives in a vermin-infested attic in Hackney. 'I've been landed with that baby', she said, indicating a smiling child who will be visited by the same lack of opportunities due to the limits placed on her mental and physical growth. 'I can't leave her because of the mice. She can't go on the floor because of the bugs and damp.'

Nine months ago Pamela received a letter from the Council awarding her 81 points. This wretched credit of official failure was too low to get her rehoused and the inconsolable girl is now pregnant again, too anaemic for the pill. 'If we visit her she *might* get another 20 points', said a Councillor. 'If I don't get rehoused they'll take away my children', said Pamela. 'The downhill spiral has reached bottom', said Prof A. H. Halsey. His words contained the only kind of hope available in such times. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2787 **Set by P. Kay**

There was news recently of one of the church's intermittent attempts to increase its popularity with today's stay-at-home, TV-watching young. Clearly it needs to use the medium itself to get its message across. Extracts, please, from *The Confessionals*, *M*A*S*S*, *Ordination Street*, *Are You Being Saved?* or any equivalent programme. Max. 120 words. By 23 September.

No 2784 **Set by Maud Gracechurch**

Excerpts from unpublished children's books by well-known adult authors.

Report **By PC 49**

'Hullo, hullo, hullo', I thought as I surveyed the somewhat swollen mailbags. 'They're back from Torremolinos and looking for a bit of the ready to see them through to pay day.' A very law-abiding entry, though, if I may say so. The shredder had few miscreants to deal with. It was not what you'd call a great comp., but capable, very capable. The entries printed will be rewarded in due course with eight soiled notes from the complex benevolent fund all round.

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The Portrait of a Child

Christopher, a boy aged at a median point between the years of five and seven, had lodged that very morning a request – peremptory in its tone, petitionary in its purpose – for an item of dress which would have been not inappropriate – setting aside its infantile modifications – to a pioneer of the *soi-disant* Wild West. His parents, of respectable station and tenacious of most particular views on the question of paedutics, had otherwise determined that the infant should pass the pre-prandial hour in the perusal of a set of verses narrating the melancholy fragmentation of an ovoid, supra-mural personage in yellow check trousers whom all the king's horses and ancillary equipage could not restore to pristine wholeness. The boy's mother sighed deeply at the prospect of lachrymose altercation at such an early hour.

NICHOLAS MURRAY

Little Brothers and Sisters

'So we were heard and not seen', said Hector, reaching the schoolroom.

'It is not what children are supposed to be.'

'It is the opposite', said Lesbia. 'We must be heard occasionally, though. It is expected of us.'

The Caistor children had been given the Christian names of rich God-parents, the richest of whom, Lesbia Chaveling, had had parents whose respect for the classics was matched by their ignorance of them. Lady Caistor regarded obkections to the name as frivolous. The Chaveling fortune was large.

'Miss Wates will not let us know she heard', said Hector. 'It is a good thing we saw her.'

'Yes. Forewarned is forearmed. Servants always listen, and governesses tell parents.'

'This one will not do so', said Hector, at the window. 'Miss Wates is floating face down in the lake.'

'She will be seen and not heard', said Lesbia.

MARGARET ROGERS

Ern Burial

The Solemnities, Ceremonies, Rites of Ern's Internment, so Solemnly delivered by the Authors, we shall not disparage our Reader to repeat. Only the last and touching Hymn Mandy and Mary sang as they deposited their Canary in damp and mouldy soil: All Things Bright and Beautiful. Two weeks later they disinterred Ern to see what they might discover in his Subterranean World, and the contents may be described: one Skull, Ribs, one Beak, Wing Bones, and Feathers, together with the Architects of his Dissolution, one and twenty White Maggots.

Thus lay the Remains of their Golden Ern, eminently above the Earth, not to find the quiet of his bones, which they kept in a Matchbox until Nurse found them and threw them down the Waste Disposal.

T. GRIFFITHS

Neverendgame

Do you like telling yourself stories? I do. Especially when I'm in bed. At night. When it's all black everywhere and we can't see. Or grey. Because it's never *really* black is it? So we can't be frightened, or alone, or quiet. We're never ever going to be quiet again, are we? Or stop playing games and telling ourselves stories. We're going to make another somebody to be in bed like us, or maybe imagine dead. Imagine? It's fun, isn't it? We can say it's fun. Call it fun. Or make someone very very old with a mummy and a daddy who are even OLDER and they've been naughty so he's put them in pots by his bed WITH LIDS ON and they have to knock to come out but he says no it's bedtime and he pushes them back in and puts the lids back hard and they go help ho and he's laughing and he can't stop and he goes on, can't stop, must go on, never any end any more, play, play, play . . .

FELICITY CURRIE

FIRST PERSON

Jeremy Lewis

On not being sérieux

SOME TWENTY YEARS AGO, when I was an undergraduate at what the experts then agreed to be Europe's idlest university, and had spent the first week of a summer term sweating into a bushy red beard (false) of the kind preferred by Karl Marx or George Bernard Shaw and thinking myself a wag of the first order, a good friend of mine – now a fearsome lady journalist, and an altogether excellent woman – decided that infantilism could be taken too far. 'The trouble with you, Jeremy', she intoned, gazing sternly into my eyes, 'is that you are *pas sérieux*.'

Although I felt very *sérieux* about her at the time, and quite right too, I had to admit that there was some truth in the soft impeachment: to my shame, the passing of time leaves me as un*sérieux* as ever, keenly appreciative of my daughters' lavatory jokes, incapable of confronting the responsibilities of career and family life with a firm, self-confident smile playing about my lips, baffled and bored by insurance policies, gear-boxes and the complexities of proportional representation.

Sad to say, life for us un*sérieux* types is far from being the light-hearted romp an essential frivolity of mind might suggest. Many of us are heavy-weather merchants of the worst kind as far as our jobs and private lives are concerned, racked and agonised by indecision and infirmity of purpose, secretly envious of our *sérieux* (if stodgy) contemporaries who have known from the age of nine where and how they wanted to go and now find themselves at the tops of their respective trees, with company cars, pension schemes and folders bulging with insurance policies nestling in the branches below. And however fickle or insubstantial our attitudes towards the burning issues of the day, most of us are replete with fiercely held convictions on a vast variety of topics, from the immeasurable superiority of the novels of R. S. Surtees over those of Henry James to a hatred of *The Good News Bible*, concrete buildings, dralon three-piece suites and other things of that sort.

I have a sneaking suspicion that the army of the un*sérieux* is mightier than it might appear; and since its members often prove unamenable to the notions – much favoured by ideologues and statisticians – that because X holds certain views on a particular subject he must, by definition, subscribe to a virtual manifesto of mysteriously related beliefs, and that X has (or ought to have) firmly held opinions on topics ranging from dogs' messes in public places to the invasion of Chad, it might be helpful if I set out some of our graver character defects, thus facilitating our detection and exposure.

IN THE first place our opinions, far from being resolute and firmly thought out, are swayed to a disgraceful degree by the company we're in. Put us in a room full of stockbrokers of the louder-voiced variety or ladies with electric-blue hair complaining about the work-force, and we dream of revolutionary hordes storming through the Home Counties, expropriating season tickets and share certificates and releasing unhappy Filipinos from servitude in Weybridge; whereas five minutes in the company of the high-minded – omniscient, priggish, bearing the sins of the world with such glum complacency – and we race to the pages of the *Telegraph* or contemplate taking up golf in somewhere like Camberley.

The sight of some eager Philistine installing carriage lamps and plate-glass windows and gleaming teak doors in a late Victorian house of the kind admired by Mark Girouard brings us out in blisters of apoplectic rage; the merest whiff of a Peterhouse aesthete and we are overcome with unworthy longings to see the vulgarians storm that curious citadel of learning, installing space invaders in the Senior Common Room and making a mighty bonfire in the court of assorted wing collars, busts of Charles I and aged copies of Debrett.

Not only are we un*sérieux* types wretchedly volatile in our opinions, shooting across the spectrum in a flurry of constant flight; we're also addicted to the trivial, strong on inessentials and weak on what it all adds up to. Avid students of potted biographies, we remember exactly where particular authors went to school and how long they spent as barmen, cowboys or copywriters, without retaining the faintest notion of what their masterpieces were supposed to be about.

When asking directions in the street we become so gripped by the colour of our informant's tie or the curious motion of his Adam's apple that we come away no wiser than before; the real excitement of a visit to the theatre consists in wondering whether the food on stage is real or false, and hoping that the door will jam or the scenery topple just as the leading lady makes her triumphant entry.

Deep down, of course, we long to be as *sérieux* as the man next door – but all in our own good time. One day, we like to think, something will happen to make us take a grip on life and sort out our ideas once and for all; in the meantime, we go on deferring the big decisions with Micawberish abandon. Even God – understandably anxious to know whether we think He exists or not – is reduced to making appointments which we fail to keep. All the same, the old gentleman will have the last laugh. Before too long he'll send his henchman with the scythe and the eggtimer; and by then it will be too late to make up our dithering minds either way. □

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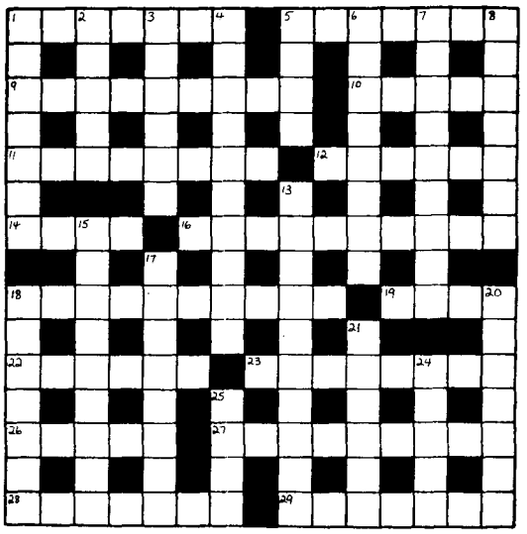
Weekend Crossword 1413

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1413, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 20 September.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

1. Battles of leaderless parties (7)
5. Delight of the tiny when holding a toy (7)
9. Noble fluff in the prelude to firing (9)
10. School fees? (5)
11. Puts up with physical parts (8)
12. Harm by giving breathing space to a single politician (6)
14. Something to wear which may be seen in the window (4)
16. Peculiar brutes held by mothers to be war heroes (10)
18. Composer who gets men to drive badly (10)
19. Stump when objections are returned (4)
22. Garments which are only changed inside us (6)
23. Given away and married after most perfect love (8)
26. Man about to be indebted for a machine (5)
27. Tree which makes the ground waste away (9)
28. Mammal hurried back, being pursued by a tailless one (7)
29. Foreigners look for negative backing (7)

DOWN

1. Prosecutes in accordance with the customs (7)
2. Play goes in to a city (5)
3. Expenditure which is a mere song if not dismissed (6)
4. Make her say so to the diviner (10)
5. Slav part of London? (4)
6. Hopeful person puts work first but after its return there is obscurity (8)
7. Bird found in a park with tree (9)
8. Provides certainty but it is enough to make us sneer (7)
13. Let the diet only be modified in accordance with authority (10)
15. Plant which has to bask by the river (9)
17. It costs little to write to a prime minister (8)
18. Islander who is a cross between two people (7)
20. Worries animals (7)
21. River which does not quite reach the top of the room (6)
24. If we left, Gilbert would be a success (5)
25. A friend's address is something precious (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1412

C	A	M	E	L	O	T		P	A	M	P	E	R	S
O		A		I		O		R		A		V		E
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I		N		T		S		F		D		N		T
N	E	E	D	L	E		P	E	D	E	S	T	A	L
T		R		E		M		R		N				E
H	A	I	L	S	T	O	R	M	S		C	L	A	D
		N		S		N		E		W		A		
P	A	G	E		S	T	O	N	E	H	E	N	G	E
L				C		E		T		E		C		L
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M	O	U	S	E	T	R	A	P		I	O	T	A	S
E		E		R		L		E		N		E		E
T	A	L	L	Y	H	O		W	A	G	E	R	E	D

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APPOINTMENTS

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Further details from: **General Secretary**
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Closing date: **3 October, 1983**

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Scale 5/SO1 £7,191-£9,660

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LISTINGS

THURS 8 SEPTEMBER

LONDON Public meeting on Labour's future. Spkr Neil Kinnock, 7.30pm Civic Suite, Wandsworth Town Hall. **Org Putney Labour Party 01-788 8961.**

8-9 SEPT LONDON Writers against nuclear weapons 24-hour reading vigil 12 noon Thurs, 8th to 12 noon, Fri 9th at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Sq. Readers incl James Cameron, Maureen Duffy, Gavin Ewart, Adrian Mitchell, Ian McEwan, Salman Rushdie, Emma Tennant, Jill Tweedie. **Org BARD (Book Action for Nuclear Disarmament). Details 0932 42274.**

FRI 9 SEPTEMBER

LONDON Picket of Defence Sales Organisation, Soho Sq, W1, 11.45am to highlight those being killed by arms sales. Bring own gravestone. (To coincide with Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition Portsmouth 12-16 Sept). **Org London Peace Action. Details Ann 01-633 0133 x 22/Keith 01-622 8426 (eves).**

9-11 SEPT MANCHESTER Who needs? Who cares? Conference at Manchester University to examine increasing needs and decreasing resources in community care and unemployment. Spkrs incl David Blunkett, Michael Meadowcroft MP, Elizabeth Peacock MP, Dr Judith Grey. Cost £49. **Org Councils for Voluntary Service (National Association). Details Janet Harrison, 26 Bedford Sq, London WC1 01-636 4066.**

9-11 SEPT BRIGHTON CND Skill Sharing Week and workshop, Lansdowne Centre, Creche, overnight accom available, £8/£5 unwaged. **Details: Delia Warnes, Basement Flat, 22 Gladstone Pl, Brighton. 0273 672545.**

HORNSEY Fabian Society AGM plus spkr (Lord) Andrew McIntosh 'Making Parliament Work.' New members welcome. 8pm, 28 Middle Lane, N8. **Details 01-348 7808.**

SAT 10 SEPTEMBER

LONDON 'Turkey: a nation behind bars'. Meeting to launch new pamphlet on Fatsa trial & protest against junta's crimes. Turkish & UK spkrs. 2.30pm Stoke Newington Town Hall, Stoke Newington Church Street, N16. **Org Turkish Solidarity Campaign.**

LONDON ILEA Manifesto Consultation 10-5 County Hall, SE1. Parents and students welcome to put views on educational priorities. **Details Steven Cowan, Greater London Labour Party Education Policy Working Party, 22 Damien Court, Damien Street, E1.**

LONDON Festival of Latin American Culture – *film, dance, music, theatre, mime, children's* events, poetry, exhibitions, etc. 10.30am-11.30pm, Imperial College Students' Union, Prince Consort Road, SW7. Tickets at door, £3 waged/£1.50 unwaged. **Org Chile Democratico, El Salvador Solidarity Campaign, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign, 01-359 2270.**

LONDON Forest Peace Festival noon-7pm, Friends Meeting House, Bush Road, Leytonstone, E11. Adm £1 adults/unwaged and unaccompanied children 50p/accompanied children free. **Org Waltham Forest CND. Details John Tonge/Rosemary Royds 01-520 0977.**

MON 12 SEPTEMBER

12-18 SEPT WALES A celebration & challenge – a week of events for women all over Wales includes exhibitions in libraries & bookshops focusing on Welsh women writers. Amenities for women in leisure centres to be given prominence. **Details Nina Davies, People and Work Unit, AUEW House, 34-38 Stow Hill, Newport, Gwent 0633 62326.**

TUES 13 SEPTEMBER

LONDON Meeting of Peace Education Group 5.30pm, 6 Endsleigh Street, WC1. **Org Peace Pledge Union. Details Jackie Robinson 01-387 5501.**

FORTHCOMING

16-18 SEPT Leeds Equality & Inequalities in Modern France. Residential conf at Univ of Leeds. **Details D. S. Bell, Dept of Politics, Univ of Leeds.**

17 SEPT Glasgow Labour's future after the general election. Spkrs Tony Benn, Michael Meacher MP, Dennis Canavan MP. 10.15am, Glasgow Film Theatre. **Org LCC Scotland.**

17 SEPT London It can't happen again! – Labour's return. Local discn conf 10am-4.15pm, Brabant Road Community Centre, 2a Brabant Road, Wood Green, N22. Creche. Adm free. **Org Hornsey & Wood Green CLP. Details Geoff Sheridan 01-703 5298 (day).**

19 SEPT London Defence without the Bomb. Meeting with Michael Randle of Alternative Defence Commission. 7.30pm, Junction Resource Centre, 248 Lavender Hill (above Fads), SW11. Adm free. **Org Battersea CND.**

23-25 SEPT Canterbury Sixth National Conf 1983 of the Association for the Teaching of Caribbean, African and Asian Literature. Theme: Childhood. Spkrs, workshops, disco. Adm £48 residents/£30 non-residents/£7.50 per day (£15 for weekend), non-resident. **Details Vicky Unwin 01-637 3311 (day)/01-960 7887 (eves).**

24 SEPT Stirling Meeting to discuss launch of new monthly paper of the Left in Scotland, 'Scottish Socialist'. 12-5pm Cowane Centre. **Details Jean Mackenzie, 59 Durward Avenue, Glasgow G41 041-649 8958.**

24 SEPT London Open University CND day school, 11am Parsifal College, Finchley Road. Spkrs, Workshops, films. Accom available. **Details Chris Wharton, 76 Hackness Road, Scarborough.**

25 SEPT London Sixth Waltham Forest Festival for Racial Harmony. Musicians, dance & drama groups, stalls. National or fancy dress. 1.30-5.30pm, Lloyd Park, Forest Road, E17. Adm free. **Org Waltham Forest Campaign Against Racialism. Details 01-558 1992.**

26 SEPT London Inaugural meeting West London LCC. Spkr Peter Hain. 7.30pm, Bishop Creighton House, 378 Lillie Road, SW6. **Details David Ward 01-836 3672 (day)/01-736 9614 (eves).**

27-29 SEPT Edinburgh Trees and the wealth of nations conf to discuss ways in which trees & forests are essential to the ecological, social & economic welfare of rural & urban Britain. Spkrs incl Dr David Bellamy, Prof Tim O'Riordan, Derek Lovejoy. Cost £20. **Org University of Edinburgh, Centre for Human Ecology. Details 15 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh 8. 031-667 1011 x 6799.**

29 SEPT London for 10 weeks. 'Women at work' evg course, 7-9pm, 179 Deptford High Street, SE8. Adm £1 unwaged/£8 waged. Will cover current position of women in labour market, education & training with particular focus on Lewisham. Creche & transport home available. Sponsored by Goldsmiths' College. **Details: 01-691 3550.**

5 OCT Brighton END fringe meeting at Labour Party conf: 'A disarmament strategy for European socialist parties' with Mary Kaldor, Robin Cook MP, Mo Mowlam. 5.30pm, Royal Albion Hotel, Old Steine. **Org END 01-272 1236.**

6 OCT London '5 Nations Meeting' – E. P. Thompson & spkrs from the other countries receiving cruise missiles. 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1. **Org London END.**

7-9 OCT Whitby Whitby Labour Party 4th Annual Weekend School. *'Local Government – a* Socialist perspective'. Spkrs incl David Blunkett, Bob Cryer. Cheap accommodation, creche. **Details: Sue Griffiths, 23 Anchorage Way, Whitby, N. Yorkshire YO21 1NU. 0947 605849.**

8 OCT London 'Visible women', Conf on images or women in the media, emphasis on sex, race, class, disability and age. 9.30am-6pm, ULU, Malet Street, WC1. Adm £3/£1.50. Access for disabled, creche. **Details Women's Media Action Group, c/o AWP, Hungerford House, Embankment, London WC2 or Jean 01-737 4336.**

11 OCT London Public meeting about closure of Highgate Wing, Whittington Hospital. Spkrs incl Jeremy Corbyn MP, Michael Meacher MP, Caroline Osborn (Islington CHC), Syed Boukhari (COHSE). 7.30pm, Upstairs meeting room, Caxton House, St Johns Way, N19. **Org Socialist Health Association London Branch. Details Judy Atkinson 01-736 5120/Clive Boutle 01-444 6254.**

22 OCT London 'No cruise, no Trident, Freeze the arms race. Nuclear weapons are no defence'. CND demo to coincide with worldwide week of actions by the peace movement. Assemble Victoria Embankment (between Embankment & Blackfriars tubes) 11am. Transport arranged from every part of UK. **Contact your local CND or peace group for details or national CND 01-263 0977.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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ACADEMIC, but human, male, divorced, 49, slim, 5' 7", non-smoker, wishes to delight in slim, intelligent, affectionate, serious and light-hearted, 30-49 female. *Yorkshire, anywhere.* Box 6494.

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT woman professionally successful, personally lonely, seeks company man, 35-50, London. Please no married men, though children acceptable. Box 6471.

BUSINESS DIRECTOR, married, frequents London, late thirties, sober, liberal, would like to meet lively, sexy lady, in twenties, for companionship London trips. Good chances for travel overseas. Box 6476.

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GENTLE WOMAN, 48 years, living in North West, welcomes gentleman companion. Likes music, the Lakes, reading and pleasant conversation. Box 6455.

GRADUATE WOMAN, with a sense of humour, early fifties, wishes to meet similar male, Cambridge or King's Lynn area. Theatre, travel, music, writing, food. Box 6488.

IF YOU hate complexes, like cycling, walking, skiing, philosophising and occasional outing, I may be your man, despite being lecturer and 41. Box 6485.

INDIAN RADICAL (38), seeks permanent *relationship with unneurotic, understanding,* attractive female, up to 30, any nationality. I'm considerate, sensuous, fun-loving, good cook but dedicated revolutionary. Box 6462.

JEWISH GENTLEMAN, genuine, sincere, healthy 58, divorced, Continental born, residing *London, recently unemployed,* not too rich, wishes meet very refined lady, view marriage only. Box 6469.

LIVELY, CREATIVE, alert, aware, sensitive, intelligent, unattached, available, professional, warm, mature, masculine male, non-smoker, sought by similar, feminine female, liberated, lonely, London-based. Box 6479.

MALE ACADEMIC, 36, attractive, cultivated, musical, Berkshire-based, much to give but no current takers. Welcomes feminine companionship. Sm. photo ensures reply, but not obligatory. Box 6454.

MAN AGED 37, *divorced, living in Manchester,* likes photography, cycling, countryside, arts, seeks woman for fun, caring, equal relationship. Box 6468.

MAN NEEDED to share life of woman, 40 (separated), attractive, graduate, values family life, teacher, interested *politics,* many other things, adaptable, warm, loving. Box 6467.

MAN, 25, would like to correspond with men and women, all ages, from all areas. Interests: poetry, music, art, literature. Box 6477.

NON AFFLUENT, but world travelled male, retired, Anglesey home, seeks woman companion, non-smoker, *intellectual, placid, lively* curiosity, but content with quiet ambiance, reliable. Box 6489.

PAINTER, WIDOWER, mid 60s, no children, opera, drama, music lover, seeks petite lady, similar status and interests. *Ideally a serious* painter, potter, sculptor, printmaker. Share *studios London, Provence.* Friendship/marriage. Box 6490.

RETURNING ENGLISHWOMAN, youthful 47, companionable, sensitive, considerate, loyal, *wide thinking,* many intellectual interests. Loves music, travel, animals, humour, country, sport, seeks similar friend, South. Box 6406.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 42, slim, dry sense of humour, 'trapped' in unsatisfactory relationship, seeks *lasting, rewarding friendship,* with an intelligent female. Box 6478.

SINGLE WOMAN, early 40s, community worker, passionate and enthusiastic about people/causes, *likes reading, films, art nouveau,* metro stations, wants intelligent, unattached, *left-wing,* 5' 8"+ man, 30-50, for fun and warm relationship. London area. Box 6458.

UNSOLEMN UNATTACHED, educated London *man,* wishes to meet personable, intelligent, lively, unopinionated lady, forties, to share civilised bourgeois indulgences. Non-socialist preferred. Box 6486.

GROUPS/MEETINGS

Conference on

DHSS FRAUD

Sat. 24 Sept.

10.30 a.m.-5 p.m.

University of London Union
1 Malet Street, London WC1

CPSA & SCPS, unions which represent members in the DHSS are organising the conference to consider the whole question of Fraud control in the Department and the action of Specialist Claims Control teams in the light of such exercises by the Department as 'Operation Major'

Interested organisations are invited to seek further details from:

Geoff Lewtas, CPSA 215 Balham High Road, London SW17

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage), 'The Rivals', 'Tales from Hollywood', 'Guys and Dolls'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage), 'Inner Voices', 'You can't take it with you'. Cottesloe (*small auditorium*), 'Small Change', 'Glengarry Glen Ross'. See daily *press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.*

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY. 01-628 8795, cc 01-638 8891, 24hr info 01-628 2295. Few day seats £4 from 10 a.m. S. Booking open for new season 12 Oct.-28 Jan.: BARBICAN THEATRE – 'MAYDAYS' by David Edgar joins 'THE TEMPEST', 'MACBETH', & 'MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING' in repertoire. From 17 Dec. 'PETER PAN'. THE PIT . 'THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY' by Nicholas Wright in repertoire with Bulgakov's 'MOLIERE', 'ARDEN OF FAVERSHAM' Bond's 'LEAR'.

MERMAID THEATRE. 01-236 5568. Opens 9 Sept, 7p.m. Subs Eves 7.45p.m.
FRANCES de la TOUR
IAN BANNEN and ALAN DEVLIN
in
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by
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SHAW THEATRE. 01-388 1394
NATIONAL YOUTH THEATRE
in
I GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU
by Bill Buffery. LAST 3 PERFS. TONIGHT AT 7.30
TOMORROW at 2.30 & 7.30

AWARDS

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The Socialist Society

Summer School

September 17-18 *10.30–5*

County Hall, London SE1

Theme: ***No turning back***

Saturday: J Palmer; J Corbyn, R Murray, M Ward on socialist strategy for the defence of local democracy; B Lowe on Nato: in or out? A Arblaster on right wing ideology; M Cooley, *H Beynon on socialist analysis of new technology; J Pearce, J Dunkerly on Central America; *D Widgery, CP speaker on socialist alternatives to the Labour Party; N Sharman, R Cox on relevance of workers' co-operatives; H Patterson on Ireland: why has the left failed? feminism and the women's movement; J Couzens on women and extra-parliamentary democracy; N Blake, R Profit, A Wilson on immigration and the repression state; J Vernon on green politics for Britain?

Sunday: T Benn, A Barnett, *S Rowbotham; C Benn on YTS–training or exploitation? J Palmer, A Lomas MP on the Common Market; G Hodgson, T Ali on what next for the Labour left? L De Groot, D Sullivan, I Beavis on how we defend services; C Harwood on women's peace movement; M Rustin on politics of PR

£6 waged/members: £3 unwaged: £8 waged/nonmembers
Creche (must be booked)

BOOKING DETAILS: Socialist Society, 9 Poland Street, London W1 (01-734 8501) *speakers not yet confirmed

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